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THE DUTCHMAN'S FIRESIDE.

THE
DUTCHMAN'S FIRESIDE.

A TALE.

BY

JAMES K. PAULDING.

"SOMEWHERE ABOUT THE TIME OF THE OLD FRENCH WAR."

EDITED BY WILLIAM I. PAULDING.

IN ONE VOLUME.



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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THE most successful of Mr. Paulding's works, and the most deserving of success, was "The Dutchman's Fireside," published in 1831. This he prefaced, himself, only with the following modest

"ADVERTISEMENT.

The idea of the following tale was conceived on reading, many years ago, 'The Memoirs of an American Lady,' by Mrs. Grant, of Laggan, and the work partly finished about that time. The reader acquainted with the book referred to will, perhaps, wonder at the indiscretion of the author of The Dutchman's Fireside in thus, as it were, provoking a comparison with one of the finest sketches of early American manners ever drawn.

April, 1831."

This novel was, no doubt, notwithstanding what is said above, written heedlessly, as the rest of Mr. Paulding's works were. His references to Sir William Johnson and to the military operations in which he was engaged are far from accurate, and in other particulars connected with that personage he is in error; while a singular discrepancy in point of

time, (arising perhaps from the intermission of labor on the book which is alluded to in the "Advertisement"), is noticeable, where Sybrant Westbrook, leaving Johnstown near the Mohawk river in what we must suppose to have been the fall of the year, and travelling direct to the vicinity of Albany, arrives there in June.

These things, however, in no way affect the charm of the work, which lies in its unaffected simplicity, its intimate relations with Nature, its truth to human character.

But it is not for me to pass judgment on this production. I stand too much in the position of a pleader—no, that is not true, nor even of an advocate—but in the position of one who displays wares for people to buy if they think they get their money's-worth in return. Yet this will I observe:—one would think that it should be evermore a favorite with all the many thousands who, every year, abandon the homesteads and the rural hearth-stones of the land, to fight the battle of fortune in our cities and our towns. For it ought to bring back to them, if they have not become wholly the servitors of brick and mortar, all earlier and purer recollections. Like the dying Falstaff, it babbles "of green fields", and it is instinct with the very freshness and fulness of June. I can only say for myself, that, as I have sat over these pages in the weary toil of examining proofs, with a brain intent upon commas and spelling, sometimes as it were the damp breath of the mould would

rise upon the air about me, and presently there would come a whiff of the mysterious and transporting perfume of the wild grape of our woods, which thrills for a moment on the breeze, and then, in a moment again, is gone.

Whatever may be my opinion as to the merit of the book, one thing is certain. Its success, on its first publication, was immediate and marked, and indications of a permanent hold upon the public mind have not since been lacking. In England it met with appreciative criticism; and it was translated into two foreign languages.

These circumstances gratified no less the author's national than his personal pride, as we may readily believe. At least, it was in no spirit of mere conceit that he wrote, some years later,—on the 7th of March, 1834—to “Mr. Thomas W. White, Bookseller”, of Richmond, Virginia, who was then, or at one time, interested in *The Southern Literary Messenger*.

“It has always been one of my first objects, to which a great portion of my life has been devoted, to incite and encourage the genius of this country, and, most especially, to draw its attention and its efforts toward our own history, traditions, scenery, and manners, instead of foraging in the barren and exhausted fields of the Old World. I have lived to see this object in a great measure accomplished, and one of the most gratifying of all my reflexions is, that possibly I may have had some little agency in bringing it about.”

Fairly might he write thus. The terrible genius of Hawthorne, indeed, had not yet, through the medium

of that limpid English of his, cast those weird and dark-lantern flashes of light upon what had been supposed to be only bare and dingy annals, but which he has shown to be susceptible of the effects of Rembrandt himself;—but “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” had been given to the world; Cooper had already painted his most vivid pictures of the wild woods and the sea; and Mr. Paulding himself had done something. Yes, there was now a germ of an American literature; distinct; on its own root; growing; vigorous; and not to be pooh-poohd, or trampled under foot, or easily done to death, any more.

Assuredly, the time will arrive when the AMERICANS, as a people, will take pride in a literature of their own, and realize that a National Literature is a National Power. With the dawn of that day, methinks the reputation of James K. Paulding will begin to mount and spread among Americans, for then will they look back in gratitude on those that led in the mighty round: and, when I consider of the many thousand millions that are yet to bear that continental and imperial name, I say to myself that those interested in his fame may well take heart unto themselves, albeit mayhap they see it grow but slowly at the first.

That American Literature has done all, or the noblest, that it has been appointed for it to do—that the names, however great, which have already made it illustrious, are to be the greatest in its history—that it is henceforth and forever to degenerate into

sensation, burlesque, and dish-water — is not, for one moment, to be admitted. A people with prospects so magnificent and such a fund of energy must, sooner or later, develop a corresponding literature — as vigorous and varied, and yet not all the same, as that of the Mother Country, and worthy to demand a place by the side of the grand old literature of England at its bravest and its best.

Doubtless, the universal and ever-living men are yet to come. They *will* come. But, among the precursors of those giants that are to cast their lengthening, broadening shadows far adown the centuries, it seems to me that JAMES K. PAULDING should always hold a prominent position and name; while, with regard to *THE DUTCHMAN'S FIRESIDE*, as an artistic study of a condition of society almost peculiar to his native State in the colonial time, I must be permitted to disbelieve that it can ever be superseded.

W. I. P.

THE DUTCHMAN'S FIRESIDE.

PART I.



THE DUTCHMAN'S FIRESIDE.

CHAPTER I.

RURAL SCENES AND RURAL MANNERS.

"SOMEWHERE about the time of the old French war," there resided on the rich border that skirts the Hudson, not a hundred miles from the good city of Albany, a family of some distinction, which we shall call Vancour, consisting of three brothers, whose names were Egbert, Dennis, and Ariel, or Auriel as it was pronounced by the Dutch of that day. They were the sons of one of the earliest as well as most respectable of the emigrants from Holland, and honourably sustained the dignity of their ancestry, by sturdy integrity, liberal hospitality, and a generous public spirit.

On the death of the patriarch, who departed this life almost a century old, according to the custom of those early times the estate was amicably divided among his three sons; the portion of the eldest being distinguished from that of the others only by comprising the mansion-house. This was the sole compliment paid to the right of primogeniture, which in almost every other Christian country swallows up the

inheritance of the younger offspring, and enables one man to wallow in overgrown luxury, at the expense of all the rest of his blood and name. It was rather a voluntary acknowledgment than a concession claimed. At this early period it was not the general custom in the State for people that had children to make their wills; and, however singular it may seem, there were fewer lawsuits concerning the division of property among heirs, than there are now, when such particular care is taken in the devising of estates, that it generally takes three or four courts, six or eight lawyers, and the like number of years, to interpret the oracle. And how can it be otherwise? — since I once heard a great pleader affirm, that there never were three words put together, in any language, that would not admit of three different interpretations. Here, however, there was no necessity for the interference of strangers; the children knew the wishes of their parents, and, for the most part, complied without a murmur.

The settlement of Mr. Vancour's affairs was actually made without consulting a lawyer; partly, perhaps, for the reason that there was no person of that description within less than one hundred and sixty miles, at New York. According to Pliny, Rome subsisted five hundred years without a physician; which fact, however incredible it may appear, is equalled by the miracle of the city of Albany and the surrounding country having flourished for the best part of a century without the aid of a single jurist. People can no more go to law without lawyers than to war without arms. Deprive them of both, and there would be no more occasion for peace societies.

But to return. Among the many good old fashions

that prevailed in the days of ignorance and simplicity among our forefathers, was that of paying their debts themselves, instead of leaving the burden to their posterity. They knew little or nothing of the virtues of the *post obit*; nor, I believe, did it ever occur to them, that it was a capital speculation to revel in luxuries and support a splendid establishment during life, leaving the penalty to be paid by their offspring. When old Mr. Vancour died, he paid the only debt he owed — the debt of nature.

In the division of the estate, Egbert, the eldest brother, received the third part, which occupied the centre, with the old mansion; Dennis, that on the right hand, and Ariel, that on the left. Each of these included the space between a range of hills and the banks of the Hudson, on which they bordered about two miles, equally. With a view to this arrangement, Mr. Vancour had erected, at different times, a comfortable house on each of the wings of his domain; so that the two younger brothers were saved the expense of building.

At the period in which our history commences, the old gentleman had been dead many years, and Ariel, the youngest of the three brothers, was fast sliding towards that stage of life in which a man runs imminent risk of being set down as an old-bachelor by the young ladies. Dennis, the second brother, was a widower, without issue; and Egbert was blessed with a most notable wife, the mother of an only daughter just verging on womanhood and finishing her education at a boarding-school in New York. The house occupied by Mr. Vancour was built when it was customary for men to anticipate the possibility of their

descendants', (some one of them at least), inheriting and dwelling in their old nestling-places. It was a large foursquare mansion of two low stories, built of little yellow Dutch bricks, imported from Holland, as much from veneration for the "Faderland," as from a certain unconsciousness of the capacity to do any thing out of the ordinary way, that long beset and still in some degree besets the occupants of this western world. Right through the centre ran a wide and stately hall, wainscoted with oak; from the farther end of which a broad staircase rose in an easy ascent. This staircase was defended on the outer side by a row of chubby mahogany balusters, ranged so as almost to touch each other, and presenting in their plump solidity fit models for the legs of all the gallant burghers of the country round. We know not whether it was in sympathy with these classical patterns, or from some other more occult influence, but, certain it is, there hath not, since the fashion of them changed, been seen so goodly a set of legs, not even in the picture of the Declaration of our Independence, as was exhibited every Sunday in the little stone church of the Flats, at the time of which we are treating.

The furniture of the mansion corresponded with its Doric dignity and simplicity. There was nothing too fine for use, or which was not used whenever occasion required; although, we are willing to confess, there was one hallowed room, dignified with the title of THE SPARE ROOM, which was difficult of access, and into which no one intruded except on very particular occasions. This was the sacred depository of ancestral heirlooms—chairs with high and haughty backs and worked satin bottoms, from the old country; a Brus-

sels carpet; two vast china jars, nearly five feet high, one on either side of the chimney; and the treasure of all treasures, a Dutch cabinet, exactly such a one as is now to be seen at Hampton Court, left there by King William, so exuberantly and yet so tastefully and richly ornamented with brass hinges and a lock covering almost half its front, that, when properly rubbed, as it was every day, it was dazzling to behold. The brass had a silvery whiteness, a delicate lustre, such as is never exhibited by the bastard imitation of these degenerate days. But the most valued and valuable part of the embellishments consisted in a number of fine pictures of the Flemish school, which the elder Mr. Vancour had brought with him from Holland, and which have since been lost by the burning of the mansion of one of his later descendants.

The house stood about a quarter of a mile from the river, in the midst of a rich meadow, dotted here and there with a vast primeval elm, standing like a wide umbrella, under which the lazy herds lay ruminating, protected from the mid-day sun. Four of these elms surrounded and almost hid the mansion, all but its front, and furnished retreats for a host of twittering birds. Within a hundred yards, on one side, ran a brook, which descended from the hills about a mile in the rear, and which in the course of ages had made a deep ravine, skirted on either side with a wilderness of various trees, and shrubs, and briers, and wild flowers, and vines of every sort, whence went up, in the genial season, a perpetual concert of nature's never-tiring and never-tired songsters. This copse was wide enough to shelter an invisible road, the only passage to and from the house; so that all around it was

nothing but one fair carpet of delicious green, unbroken by road or pathway.

The river in front slept between its verdant banks, for its course was so slow, so quiet, so almost imperceptible, that it seemed to partake in that repose which it diffused all around. Besides the elms and sycamores which the rich alluvion fostered into majestic growth, its borders were fringed at intervals with silvery willows drinking its pure moisture, and other dwarfish fry, from whose branches hung grape-vines and vines of various other names, forming canopies, through which the pattering shower could scarcely win its way. The stream was about a quarter of a mile wide, so that every rural sight and rural sound could be clearly distinguished from side to side; and, at the termination of the rich meadows on the opposite shore, there rose a bold precipice of gray rock, enamelled with light green mosses, and bearing on its summit a crown of towering pines of everlasting verdure.

There is certainly in the majesty of nature, its hoary rocks, its silent shadowy glens, foaming torrents, and lofty mountains, something that awakens the soul to high contemplation and rouses its slumbering energies. But there is in her gentler beauties, her rich and laughing meadows decked with flowers and joyous with sprightly birds, her waving fields of grain, her noiseless glassy streams, a charm not less delightful, and far more lasting than the high-wrought enthusiasm induced by the other. Both have, without doubt, their influence on the human character. He who lives in the rude regions of the mountain solitude will generally prefer dangerous and fatiguing enter-

prise to easy and wholesome labours. He would rather risk his safety for a meal, or go without it entirely, than earn it by the sweat of his brow in the cultivation of the earth. But the inhabitant of the rich plain, that yields from its generous bosom an ample reward for every hour of labour he bestows, is enamoured of security; he hates all changes but those of the revolving seasons; is seldom buffeted by extremes of passion, never elevated to enthusiasm, or depressed to despair. If let alone, his life will probably glide away as noiselessly, if not as pure, as the gentle stream that winds its way unheard through his lowland domain. It has been said, a thousand times, that the inhabitants of mountains are more attached to their homes than those of the lowlands; but I doubt the truth of the observation. Take any man away from his home and his accustomed routine of life, and he will sigh to return to them, the native of the plain, as well as the dweller among the hills. The former we doubt would be as wretched among the rocks and torrents, the wild beasts, and hunters equally wild, as the latter in the laborious quiet of the fruitful valleys.

However this may be, the brothers to whom the reader has just been introduced partook in a great degree of the character of the scene which was at once their birthplace and their inheritance, but modified in some particulars by certain peculiarities in their situation. Peaceful as was the abode they inhabited and the aspect of all around them, they were not always reposing in the lap of security. Within thirty or forty miles, in almost every direction, roamed various tribes of Indians, whose fierce, unsteady, and revenge-

ful nature made their friendship as precarious as their enmity was terrible. True, they were now at peace, or rather they had begun to submit to their inevitable destiny; yet their friendship could not be relied on, and they not unfrequently approached the neighbouring settlements in the dead of the night, where they committed the most horrible atrocities. This state of things contributed to keep up a warlike spirit and habits of dangerous enterprise among the early settlers, and they partook of the opposite characters of husbandman and soldier, in a degree which has seldom been known in the inhabitants of the rest of the world. The Vancours and their neighbours all found it necessary to mingle the arts of peace and war together; all had their arms at hand, and all knew how to use them.

The Vancours were people of fashion, as well as fortune. The elder more especially, from inhabiting the family mansion, and having a regularly established household, saw a great deal of company at times, from Albany, New York, and elsewhere. His house, indeed, was open to all respectable visitors, and was seldom without the presence of some stranger, friend, or relative from a distance. They were received and treated with that plain, unostentatious, quiet hospitality which always bespeaks a welcome. Madam Vancour, as she was called by way of eminence, was a New York lady born and bred, partaking almost equally in the blood of the genuine Hollander, the Englishman, and the Huguenot. New York, being at that time the residence of the English governor, was, of course, the focus of fashion. The governor affected somewhat of the kingly state; and, there being always a consid-

erable number of troops in garrison, the place swarmed with redcoats, as some of our eating-cellars now do with boiled lobsters. These ruddy sons of Mars were the prime objects of the ambition of our city belles, and happy was the damsel and proud the mother that could unite their fate and family with the lieutenant of a company of British grenadiers. His excellency, like most other excellencies, had plenty of aides-de-camp to keep up his state, write his invitations, pick up news, and carve at his table. These important functions, of course, entitled them to great distinction among our provincial belles, and it is on record in the traditions of those times, that the good matrons of the capital could never sleep quietly the night before a ball at the government-house, for thinking whether their daughters would dance with an aide-de-camp. Occasionally one of these would demean himself by marrying an indigenous heiress, and many of the largest estates in the province, with a blooming damsel at the back of them, were exchanged for a red coat and a pair of gorgeous epaulettes, to the infinite contentment of the mothers, who partook largely in the dignity of the connexion. I cannot affirm that the fathers and brothers shared in these triumphs; for, already, the fine airs of the pompous intruders, and their undisguised assumption of superiority, had awakened in the bosoms of these homely provincials a feeling, which, in after-times mingling with others equally powerful, produced a revolution, of which the world yet feels, and will long feel, the influence. The Vancours had many connexions in New York, among the most wealthy and fashionable of the inhabitants, and seldom missed paying them a visit of

a few weeks in the course of every autumn. They were always well received, and, as the governor never came to Albany without partaking in their hospitalities, he thought himself bound to repay them when they visited the place of his residence. This intercourse with the gay world kept up certain feelings and ways, which seldom fail to accompany it; still, in the main, their characters partook largely of the simplicity of the country where they dwelt. In manners they might not be particularly distinguished from the polite and well-bred people of the world; but in habits and modes of thinking they were essentially different. There was a certain hale simplicity in their mode of life, which has long since passed away, leaving behind what I sometimes feel inclined to doubt is but an inadequate compensation for its loss.

Dennis and Ariel, the two younger brothers, being, the one a lonely widower the other an equally lonely bachelor, spent a good deal of their time at the old mansion, where they were as much at home as at their own houses. The two elder brothers were greatly attached to each other, and fond of being together in their own quiet way. They sometimes passed a whole morning without exchanging half a dozen words. They had a way of communicating their thoughts by certain little expressive inarticulate sounds and unobtrusive gestures, which each one understood as well as he did his mother tongue. Ariel, on the contrary, was ungovernably impatient of idleness, and never could sit still fifteen minutes at a time without falling into a doze. He was a great hand at grafting and inoculating fruit-trees; an in-

dustrious seeker after mushrooms; and mighty in all undertakings which had for their object the furtherance of good eating. In truth, he was one of those persons who are seldom without a project for the benefit of their neighbours, and who, though they never by any chance succeed in their own enterprises, can always tell to a nicety what will be most for the advantage of others. Dennis, on the contrary, had a horror of all innovation and improvement in rural economy; he despised labour-saving machines from the bottom of his soul, and held it as incontrovertible, that the human hand was the most perfect instrument ever invented. Ariel one year spent the proceeds of a whole crop in devising contrivances for exterminating field mice; while Egbert secured half of his by labour and attention. Somehow, so it was, one grew richer every year, and the other was always in want of money.

"They won't be here to-day," said Dennis, one morning, after his elder brother and himself had been sitting with their heads inclined towards each other about two hours, without exchanging a word.

"They won't be here to-day," echoed Egbert, and there ended the conversation, for an hour at least.

"I think it will clear up before noon," quoth Dennis, eyeing the clouds as they separated above, disclosing a little piece of clear blue sky.

"I think it will," responded Egbert, and the matter was settled.

The expected arrivals were Colonel Vancour's wife and daughter, the latter of whom, having finished her education at the boarding-school, was now on her way home from New York with her mother. The reader

will be pleased to recollect that this was long before the invention of steam-boats, and when a genuine Albany packet never dreamed of sailing but with a fair wind, nor scarcely ever passed the Overslaugh without paying it the compliment of running high and dry aground. We ourselves well remember, in times long-subsequent, having once lain there seven days within seven miles of Albany; yet such appeared the immeasurable distance, that no one on board ever dreamed of leaving the vessel and going to the city by land. All waited patiently for an easterly wind or a heavy rain, to float them off again; and spent the time pleasantly in eating and smoking. In truth, there is no greater help to patience than a pipe of Blaise Moore's tobacco. But, the fact is, neither were people so much in a hurry in those days, nor was their time half so precious as it is now. Then a man was all his life in making a fortune; at present he cannot spare so much time, because he has not only to make, but to spend, a fortune before he dies. It would have been wellnigh impossible to persuade a man to risk a quick passage to the other world, for the sake of shortening his journey in this.

The daughter, accompanied by her mother and Tjerck, an old black servant, had been expected more than a week, on every day of which precisely the same colloquy as that we have just recorded passed between the two brothers. We ought to mention, that Mr. Egbert Vancour was prevented attending the ladies home by having been appointed a commissioner to hold a treaty with the Five Nations at Schenectady. The past week had been one of almost continual rain, and the three brothers began to manifest impatience, each in his

own way — the two elder, by frequent emigrations from the chimney-corner to the window; and the younger, by marching out every five minutes, in the intervals between his naps, squaring himself with his thick short legs wide apart, and reconnoitring the weather-cock, which, by the way, was an iron shad, through whose sides were cut the letters D. V., in honour of the family.

At length, towards evening, the yellow sun broke through the opening western clouds, most gorgeously gilding the weeping landscape, and turning the cold drops of rain which had collected on the grass and waving branches of the trees to sparkling diamonds bright. A brisk yet mellow south wind sprung up, and a fleet of sloops with snow-white sails appeared below, ploughing their way merrily up the river. All turned out to see if they could distinguish the "Patroon," the vessel in which the ladies had taken passage. The indefatigable Ariel was down at the wharf, in front of the mansion-house, making a prodigious noise, and calling out to every vessel that passed, to know if the Patroon was coming, every now and then clearing his throat, as was his custom, with an "a-hem!" that at length startled a flock of black ducks, which had maintained its station in a little neighbouring cove for several days past. Sloop after sloop passed on, without stopping, until Ariel got out of all patience, and stamped about from one side of the wharf to the other, muttering that the Patroon was the worst of all vessels, and the captain the most lazy, slow-motioned, stupid of all blockheads.

"I knew it; damn him, I knew it. I'll bet my life, he is high and dry on the Overslaugh. — No! hey!

no: damn it, there she comes — there she is at last;” and he darted across the wharf towards her, with such enthusiasm that he broke his shins against a post; whereat he gave the Patroon and her captain another broadside, not forgetting the post.

Ariel was not mistaken: it was the Patroon, and, in a few minutes, Madam Vancour and her daughter Catalina were welcomed once more at the fireside of their best friends, with a quiet speechless warmth which nature dictated and nature understood. All but Ariel spoke through their eyes; but it was the characteristic of that worthy bachelor, to make a noise on all occasions of merriment or sadness; the more he felt, the more noise he made, and this propensity followed him even in his sleep; he being a most sonorous and irrepressible practitioner of snoring, in all its varieties. He paraded round the young woman, crying, “A-hem! bless me, how you have grown; a-hem! zounds, I shouldn’t have known you; why, ahem! damn it, you’re almost as tall as I am!” And then he measured his square stumpy figure with that of the tall graceful girl. Finally, having exhausted all his waking noises, he placed himself in an arm-chair and fell into a sleep, from which he was only roused by the music of setting the supper-table, which, above all others, was most agreeable to his ear. “Hey! — damn it, what have you got for supper — hey!”, and he marched round, taking special cognizance of the ample board.

“But where is Sybrandt?” asked Madam Vancour: “I expected, to be sure, he would be here to welcome us home.”

“Oh, that’s true, Dennis,” said Egbert; “what has become of the boy?”

“I can’t tell.”

Ariel broke into one of his inspiring laughs: “I can,” said he; “the poor fellow sneaked away home, as soon as he knew the Patroon was in sight.”

Egbert shrugged his shoulders; Dennis twisted a piece of celery with such a petulant jerk that he overturned the whole arrangement of the dish, the pride of Dame Nauntje, presiding goddess of the kitchen; Ariel cried, “A-hem!”, like a stentor; and Madam and her daughter exchanged significant looks, and smiled. Sybrandt appeared not, that night, and nothing more was said on the subject.

As this young gentleman is destined to make some figure in our story, we will take this opportunity to introduce him more particularly to the reader’s notice.

CHAPTER II.

THE READER IS INTRODUCED TO A BASHFUL YOUNG GENTLEMAN.

SYBRANDT WESTBROOK was the only son of a distant female kinswoman of the Vancour family; once, it was supposed, a great favourite of Mr. Dennis, who had been suspected of something more than a mere liking for the lady. She was a beauty and an heiress, and married a British officer at New York, who dissipated her property, and finally went home and never returned. She left an only son, without fortune, or a protector to his infancy. But he found one in Mr. Dennis Vancour, who, after the death of his wife, took the boy home, adopted him as his son, and superintended his education. Dennis was a worthy man, with many peculiarities. He cherished the primitive Dutch manners, and, above all, the primitive Dutch language, the only one he could now ever be brought to speak, although master of English. He had a great distaste for New-York names, modes, and follies; and, ever since he was cut out by a redcoat, nursed a mortal antipathy to every man who wore that livery. He disliked the new system of education daily gaining ground in the province, and the thousand innovations which its change of masters had introduced. The fashionable young men were coxcombs, and the fashionable young women only fit to dance, flirt, and make fools of themselves with the redcoats.

For these and divers other substantial reasons, he determined that his adopted son should receive a domestic education, under the care of the good Dominie Stettinius, pastor of the congregation. The dominie was a stanch pillar of the Reformed Dutch church, a profound scholar, and a man of great piety as well as simplicity of character. He was bred at the famous university of Leyden, that renowned seminary, where Grotius and a thousand other illustrious scholars were educated; and where Scaliger, Salmasius, and a hundred famous masters presided from time to time. It was at Leyden, in the United REPUBLICS of Holland, that scholars sought refuge from monkish bigotry, that the liberty of thought, speech, and writing, maintained itself against the persecutions of church and state; and it was there that the greatest, the most indefatigable, and the most useful scholars that perhaps the world ever knew were protected, as well as rewarded for their labours in the cause of learning and liberal opinions. The rival nations, France, Italy, and England, have sought to monopolize the glories of scholarship, science, and philosophy; but, if we resort to history and fact, we shall find that the civilized world is at least equally indebted to the FREE STATES OF HOLLAND, and that, at one period, comprising a century or more, had they not found a refuge there, they would in all probability have been persecuted into silence, if not unto death.

Dominie Stettinius had been a laborious student, and was now a ripe scholar. This was some distinction in those days, when it required the labour of years to gather that knowledge which was then dispersed among thousands of bulky volumes, but is now col-

lected and condensed in encyclopædias, dictionaries, and compendiums of various kinds. But the dominie was only a scholar and a pious divine; he possessed no one accomplishment except learning, nor had he a respect for any other; his manners were simple, almost uncouth; and such was the sobriety of his notions, that, though a kind-hearted being as ever existed, he could hardly tolerate the smiles, the gayety, and the gambols of happy childhood.

This worthy theologian, by desire of Mr. Dennis Vancour, took the entire charge of Sybrandt at the age of seven years, and made a great scholar of him at nineteen. The good divine was so zealous in plying him with books that he forgot men, and, what was worse, women, who are as necessary to the formation of mind and manners as they are to the existence of man himself. The consequence was, that the youth grew up a shy, awkward, reserved, abstract being, without the vivacity of his age, and ignorant as a child of that knowledge of the world which, like small change, is essential to the every day transactions of life. There was nothing on the face of the earth he was so much afraid of as a woman, particularly a young woman, whose very presence seemed to turn him into stone, and lock up the springs of thought as well as action. But, notwithstanding all this, woman was the divinity of his soul, worshipped in secret in his rural walks and solitary contemplations. Some ideal mistress of his own creation was ever present to his imagination, and the propensity to love, which is the universal characteristic of youth, only became the more intense from his entire abstraction from the will and the means for its gratification. Thus, while,

from a consciousness of his awkwardness and embarrassment, he shunned all personal communion with woman, his whole heart was filled and animated by a latent, smothered fire, a sleeping Cupid, which, when once roused into action by opportunity and an object, was destined to become the ruling influence of his life.

The person and aspect of Sybrandt were eminently handsome; but his carriage and address deplorably rustic and ungainly. When spoken to abruptly, his confusion had the appearance of dulness; and such were his habits of wool-gathering that he often gave the most silly answers imaginable. Thus he grew up with little to recommend him to the respect or affection of his fellow-creatures around but a sort of harmless stupidity, which the good dominie chose to call the gravity of wisdom. His vivacity, if nature had ever given him any, was entirely repressed by want of company and relaxation, reinforced by the stern discipline of the worthy Stettinius, who plied him with tasks day and night. His shoulders had become rounded like those of advancing decrepitude, and he had acquired a habit of stooping which destroyed the manliness and dignity of his figure.

With him, the happy days of childhood had been the season of perpetual toil. While he saw from the window of his prison the urchins of the neighbourhood sporting in the meadows, or by the margin of the river, and heard their shrill shouts of unchecked hilarity, Nature would yearn in his heart to partake in the frolic which she herself had provided for the little sons and daughters of men. But every glance away from the everlasting book was watched and

checked by the good dominie, who had long outlived the recollection of his youthful feelings, and buried every impulse of nature under the mighty mass of scholastic rubbish which the incessant labours of threescore years had concentrated in his memory. Assuredly learning is a thing of almost inestimable value; still, I doubt it may be bought too dearly. Why should the season of childhood, which God has ordained to be a period of freedom from cares and toils, be converted into one of labour and anxiety, for the sake of a little premature knowledge, which the tender intellect is unable to comprehend, or the comprehension of which requires an effort of the mind which stints its growth for ever afterward? When I see an urchin, who ought to be enjoying holiday and strengthening his constitution by wholesome exercise to bear the vicissitudes of the world in after-times, kidnapped and sent to school, to sit on a bench for four or five hours together, employed in learning by rote what he is unable to comprehend, I cannot help contemplating him as the slave and the victim of the vanity of the parent and the folly of the teacher. Such a system is calculated to lay a foundation for disease and decrepitude, to stint the physical and intellectual growth, and to produce a premature old age of body and mind.

Sybrandt had seen but little of Catalina, his cousin, (for so they used to style each other), previous to her being sent to the boarding-school; and less of her from that time. True, the young lady spent her vacations at home, but Sybrandt was either too hard at his studies, or too bashful, to be much in her company. When this happened, he was pretty certain to be more than commonly stupid and embarrassed, so

that Catalina had long set him down as little better than a sleepy country bumpkin of the first pretensions. The youth had anticipated her arrival and establishment at her father's mansion, as an event of great interest to him. True, he felt convinced in his own mind that he should never dare to look her full in the face, or enjoy either ease or pleasure in her society. Still, her residence so near him would furnish a new and charming object for his abstract devoirs and solitary contemplations. She would become the ideal companion of his rambles, the bright seraph of his imagination; and give a zest to his existence in that visionary world which furnished almost all the materials of his happiness. He was excessively anxious to see her, and punctual in his attendance at the mansion-house while the storm lasted and there was no immediate prospect of the young lady's arrival; but the moment the "Patroon" came in sight his heart failed him, and he retreated into the fields, there to enjoy a fancied meeting which he dared not encounter in reality. He embraced his cousin; kissed her cheek; made the most gallant, eloquent speeches; gazed in her face with eager eyes of admiration; and, in short, enjoyed in imagination an interview totally different from that which would in fact have occurred. (Gifted is the man who can thus create a paradise around him, and spin his enjoyments, as it were, from his own cocoon. This is a species of domestic manufacture) that certainly ought to be encouraged by the government. (

Mr. Dennis Vancour was somewhat indignant at the ignominious retreat of Sybrandt, to whom he delivered a weighty Dutch lecture that very night on his

sheepishness. The good man took especial care not to recollect that it was, in a great measure, owing to the system of education inflicted upon him by the dominie, with his entire approbation. He insisted on his accompanying him, the next morning, to pay his duty to the young lady; and, accordingly, an interview took place between them. On the part of Sybrandt it was shy and constrained, a mixture of pride and timidity; on that of Catalina, sprightly and good-humoured, with a subtle expression of slighting superiority, which was calculated to increase the embarrassment of one of his quick feelings, and make him appear still more awkward and stupid. The noisy, but well-meaning Ariel, made matters still worse, by occasionally urging the young man to "buck up," as he expressed it, to the young lady, and show his breeding. Poor Sybrandt wished himself a thousand miles away. By the time dinner was served, his head felt like a great bag of wool, and his heart ached with an oppressive load of imaginary contempt and ridicule, which he thought he saw in the eyes of every one, more especially those of Catalina. Ariel, who sat next him, was perpetually jogging him in the side, to offer some civility to the young lady, and at length wrought him up to the hardihood of asking her to take a glass of wine, which he did in a voice so low that nobody heard him.

"Try again," whispered Ariel; "zounds! man, you could not hear yourself, I am sure."

Sybrandt tried again, but his voice died away in murmurs. Ariel was out of patience. "A-hem!" roared he, in a voice that made his unwilling client quake. — "Ahem! — Catalina, your cousin asks you

to drink wine with him." The glasses were filled, but, unfortunately, Ariel, who was none of the smallest, sat directly between the young people, and intercepted Sybrandt's view of his cousin. When Sybrandt leaned forward to catch the lady's eye, Ariel did the like, from an inherent sympathy with motion, originating in his inveterate antipathy to sitting still; and thus they continued bobbing backwards and forwards, till Catalina could restrain herself no longer, and laughed outright. People with habits and dispositions like those of Sybrandt never fail to take the laugh all to themselves in a case like this, even when they are not the only parties concerned. The young man actually perspired with agony, and, when at length he gained an opportunity of bowing to the lady, his nerves were in such a state of agitation that he was incapable of swallowing. The wine took the wrong way, and nearly suffocated the luckless lad, who was only relieved by an ungovernable fit of coughing, during which he precipitated his draught in the face of honest Ariel.

"Blitzen!" exclaimed Dennis, but in an under tone; for he was extremely anxious that his adopted son should do credit to his education.

"A-hem! zounds!" cried Ariel, wiping his eyes, "why, Sybrandt, one would think you mistook it for a dose of physic." The young lady exchanged a significant smile with her mother, and the good Egbert, according to his custom, said nothing.

The dinner passed off without any other catastrophe, though Sybrandt trembled to his very heart-strings, and shuddered when he put any thing into his mouth, lest it might go the wrong way. He

escaped as soon as possible, and sought his usual communion with his friend and counsellor, solitude. Here his imagination expatiated amid tortures of its own creation, and painted in the most exaggerated colours the scenes that had just occurred. Under the roughness and simplicity of his appearance and manners, this young man concealed a proud sensibility, that winced under the sense of ridicule and contempt. The thought, the shadow of a thought, that he had been the object of either, stung him with a feeling of self-abasement. Such a temper aggravates the slightest matters into thorns and nettles, and, with a morbid solicitude, lies in wait for poisons to nourish its own infirmity. In five minutes after Sybrandt's departure from the mansion-house, every circumstance connected with his mortifications was entirely forgotten by all but himself. But the recollection continued to rankle in his mind for a long while afterward, rendering him, if possible, a thousand times more shy, distrustful, and sensitive than before. He never entered the old mansion, that the scene of the dinner-table did not present itself with accumulated circumstances of humiliation, paralyzing his spirits, oppressing his understanding, and giving to his actions a degree of restraint that made his company painful as well as irksome to Catalina. It was indeed but seldom that he could be induced to seek her society, though she was ever the companion of his solitude, and the theme of a thousand airy visions of the future, which he indulged without the remotest idea, or even desire, of realizing. He lived upon his own imaginings, of which, though self was always the centre, the circumference comprehended the universe. The in-

fluence of solitude on the selfish principle is almost omnipotent. He who lives to himself, and by himself, becomes, as it were, the object of his own idolatry. Having little to draw off attention from his peculiar interests, the claims, the actions, the wishes of his fellow-creatures, never intrude; or, if they intrude at all, it is as mere auxiliaries, or obstacles, to his supreme dominion. Upon him (the social feeling, which is the source of a thousand virtues,) never operates, except perhaps in some revery that calls up a momentary impulse of kindness or humanity, which dies away without ever being embodied in action. He has his being, his enjoyment, his regrets, his disappointments, concentrated in himself.

Sybrandt was an example of these truths. His principles were all good, and he practised no vices. Yet neither his talents nor his virtues were ever brought into exercise in a communion with his fellow-beings, because his pride, timidity, and sensitiveness drove him continually from society, and kept him perpetually pondering on the derision which was ever present to his fancy. Thus all his acquirements and all his good qualities lay dormant. It remained to be seen what such a being might or would become when placed in conflict with his fellows, under the incitements and temptations of the world.

CHAPTER III.

A YOUNG LADY WHO WOULD HAVE BEEN ONE HUNDRED YEARS OLD
HAD SHE LIVED LONG ENOUGH.

CATALINA VANCOUR was a very pretty, and, in the main, a very good, girl, although she had been bred at a boarding-school at New York, and danced with an aide-de-camp. She had lost much of the Doric, but had acquired a corresponding portion of the Corinthian. She often sighed for the more piquant and gorgeous amusements of the capital, and more especially for the society of the gay gallants in scarlet uniform. Still, she had not quite lost the rural feeling, nor entirely thrown off the witching influence which nature's various beauties exercise over the hearts of those who, though they have sat at the world's great banquet, still preserve a relish for more homely fare. She sometimes, in the gayety of her heart, sported with the feelings of poor Sybrandt, and rallied his shyness, unconscious of the pangs she inflicted upon his apprehensive self-love, and without noticing the dew of agony that gathered upon his forehead, as she playfully reproached him with being afraid of the young ladies.

The intercourse of young people in those times was very different from what it is at present. I pretend not, that one age is, upon the whole, wiser or better than another; or to sit in judgment upon my contemporaries. But I often catch myself contemplating,

with something like sober regret, those days of artlessness, of easy, unaffected intercourse, and manly independence. Who is there, indeed, that hath gathered from history and tradition a picture of the manners, usages, and morals of the ancient patriarchs of Albany and its neighbourhood, but will be inclined to contrast them dolefully with those of the present times? Who but will sigh to behold their places usurped by gilded butterflies, ostentatious beggary, empty pretence, and paltry affectation? In the room of men above the smiles and frowns of bankers or bankrupts, he will find speculators glittering in their borrowed plumage for an hour or two, then passing away, leaving nothing behind them but the wrecks of their unprincipled career. Where once sat the simple magistrates, administering the few simple laws necessary to regulate the orderly community over which they presided, is now collected a body of garrulous, ignorant, visionary, or corrupt legislators, pampering their own private interests at the expense of the public good, and sacrificing the prosperity of one portion of the State to the grasping avidity of another. In the room of prosperous yeomanry and thriving mechanics, we behold crowds of hungry expectants, neglecting the sure and only means of competency, and begging, in the abjectness of a debased spirit, permission to sacrifice their independence for a wretched pittance, held under the wretched tenure of a man who has no will of his own. The once quiet city, where the name and the idea of political corruption were unknown, is now a whirlpool of intrigue, where empty bubbles are generated and kept alive by the agitation of the waters, and boiling and conflicting eddies

gather into one focus all the straws, and chaff, and feathers, and worthless nothings, that float upon the surface of the stormy puddle.

An age of simplicity is an age of morality; and hence it is that the wisest writers of antiquity have made simplicity of manners essential to the preservation of that liberty which cannot be sustained by a luxurious and corrupt people. That our own heightened feelings of independence are rapidly fleeing away before the advancing steps of ostentation and luxury, and that the love of wealth, as the means of attaining to these gratifications, is becoming the ruling passion, must be obvious to all observers. — But enough of this; the subject belongs to graver heads than ours.

One smiling morning in June, when nature, to use the fashionable phrase, sent out her cards of invitation to all the living imps of earth, from those of two legs to those of a thousand, to come and revel at her banquet of flowers, zephyrs, and woodland harmonies — not forgetting the strawberries and cream — Catalina, according to the fashion of the times, had made a party with some of the lads and lasses of Albany to visit a little island lying lengthwise along the river, a mile or two below the mansion-house. Here, on the soft bosom of tranquil nature, the young people rambled about till they were tired, and then sat down on the green sward under the protecting shade of some little copse of half-grown trees canopied by grape vines, forming a vast awning over their heads. Here, at a proper time, they brought out their stores; and a collation, to which health, exercise, and cheerful innocent hearts gave zest, succeeded. Many a sober youth and red-ripe damsel were first awakened to a

gentle preference in these smiling solitudes : and many a long uncertain beauty was here brought, at last, to know her own mind, and acknowledge it to the chosen swain.

Catalina was resolved that Sybrandt should accompany the party ; not that she admired her shy and awkward cousin, or valued his society : but, I know not how it is, there is a wayward wilfulness in woman which, being common to all past times, is probably a gift of nature. We allude to the propensity to carrying a point, whether a favourite one or not ; to overcoming opposition ; to having full swing in every thing. Had Sybrandt sought her society, or discovered a disposition to be attentive, Catalina would have probably been tired to death of him in a little while, and affronted the youth downright. But he kept at a distance ; he avoided her whenever he could ; he sometimes excited her curiosity and sometimes her anger, by his lonely habits, and total neglect—in short, he was not to be had at all times, or at any time, and was, therefore, in spite of herself, an object of consequence to his cousin. But the difficulty was to catch this perverse monster, and Ariel was deputed for that purpose. There was nothing he loved like being employed upon the affairs of other people ; and Catalina had gained his whole heart by sending him to Albany every day, to purchase a paper of pins, a skein of thread, or a pennyworth of some kind or other.

Ariel, who knew some of the haunts of Sybrandt, took his gun, and went, as he said, to hunt this strange animal. Among the rugged hills that formed the inland boundary of these rich flats, was a deep romantic glen, through which a fine stream tumbled

in foaming volumes from rock to rock. It was overshadowed by huge pines and cedars, which threw their gloomy arms and locked their fingers half-way across the abyss. Here was a perpetual twilight, throughout all times of the day and every season of the year. In the hottest days of summer there was a refreshing coolness diffused around, that came with exquisite zest to the lazy and relaxed frame, and keyed the spirit up to vigorous thought. Every rock, and stump, and half-decayed branch of a mouldering tree, was coated with velvet moss; and, all along the margin of the brook, the green fringe kissed the foamy waters as they glanced away. It was here that Sybrandt was often found, deep in the reveries of a wandering mind, that seeks some steady rational object of pursuit, and floats clumsily about without purpose, like a bark away from its anchor. His mind was a perfect chaos, wanting the powerful stimulus of some master-passion, some great pursuit, to arrange its intellectual forces, and marshal them to usefulness, if not to deeds of noble daring.

Ariel was an astonishing man for killing two birds with one stone. He always had two irons in the fire at once; and nothing was more common with him than to forget them both in pursuit of a third. It is related of him, that, being one day waiting with his horse to cross the ferry at Albany, he was so taken up with the "damned stupid blundering" of the ferry-man in bringing his boat to the stairs, that he let go the bridle of his horse, who forthwith trotted gallantly away. His master pursued, and finally came up with him. But, just as he seized the bridle and turned round, he saw the ferry-boat leaving the stairs.

Whereupon he let go the bridle, and ran as fast as his little short drumsticks would permit towards the boat, hallooing to the "damned stupid blockhead" to stop. The man, being now in the current of the stream, could not or would not put back. Then did Ariel, in a great passion, bethink him of his horse; but the horse was gone too, past all recovery, having this time mended his pace to a gallop, and made straightway for home. So Ariel missed both ferry-boat and steed, by not attending to one at a time.

As he was proceeding in the execution of his commission for Catalina, unluckily for the wishes of that young lady, Ariel espied at some distance a noble flock of pigeons perched on a dead tree. The last object was always sure to carry all before it with Ariel. He forgot every thing else, and trudged away with his best speed towards this new and powerful attraction. He got a copse between him and the birds; he advanced cautiously under cover; he gained a station within gunshot, while the unconscious victims sat perfectly quiet; he cocked his piece, raised it to his shoulder, and was just taking aim, when his irresistible propensity to clearing his throat came across him, and he essayed such a stout, magnificent, "ahem!", that the birds took the alarm and flew away. "Damn it," quoth Ariel, and scampered after, following them with his eye, till he unfortunately plumped into a ditch, where he got most gloriously garnished with a coat of mud, and was fain to make the best of his way home, leaving the pigeons to their fate and Sybrandt to his solitude.

"Well, uncle," said Catalina, when she saw him, "did you see the white savage?"

"No, zounds! they all flew away", replied Ariel, thinking of the pigeons.

"Flew away! What are you talking about, uncle?"

"Why, zounds! I tell you, just as I was going to let fly at them, they flew away, and I fell into a ditch, trying to follow."

"Follow whom," said the young woman, who began to suspect honest Ariel had lost his wits.

"Why, the pigeons."

"Pigeons! I thought you went in search of Sybrandt?"

"Bless my soul! a-hem! bless my soul, so I did. But the truth is, Catty, I took my gun with me, by way of company, and met a flock of pigeons that led me plump into a ditch, and I forgot all about it."

The young lady was half-diverted, half-vexed, though well acquainted with her uncle's inveterate habit of running after anything that seized his attention for the moment. He once lost an excellent opportunity of getting married, by stopping on the way to show some boys how to catch minnows.

"I'll go this minute and look for him," added Ariel, after a moment's hesitation.

"Do, uncle; but don't take your gun with you."

"No, no."

"And don't run after the pigeons."

"O, no."

"And take care you don't fall into the ditch."

"O, never fear," and away went the good-natured Ariel, with a sonorous, "a-hem!"

On his way to the house of his brother Dennis, he saw a number of little peach-trees, just fit for inoculating, which tempted him sorely. But, luckily for the

consummation of his errand, he had left his knife at home, and there was an end of the matter. He went on, therefore, and found Sybrandt at home. That young gentleman had been considering all the morning whether he should go over and see his pretty cousin, and had just wrought himself up to the feat, when Ariel arrived with his message, which threw him into great perplexity. In going to see her of his own accord, and alone, he had privately come to an understanding with himself, that if his heart failed him by the way he could turn back again, and nobody would be the wiser. But here was a different predicament, a message and a companion, and he felt greatly inclined to demur.

“Come, come! Zounds, man, why don’t you stir yourself? When I was of your age, if a pretty girl sent for me, I was off like a shot.”

“Yes, but you never hit the mark, uncle,” said Sybrandt, smiling.

“A-hem,” quoth Ariel; “but, zounds! come along, will you? I’ve got fifty things to do this morning. Let me see—I promised to show the dominie how to ring his pigs’ noses—after that, I must go and tell the widow Van Amburgh how her geese ought to be yoked—then to squire Vervalen’s to teach them how to give a bolus to a horse—then to Riper’s, to see how his sugar-pears get on—and—but come along; damn it, I shall never get through half my business this morning.” Accordingly he seized the youth by the arm and dragged him along, half-willing, half-reluctant. A man is sometimes pleased with a little violence, which saves him the trouble of making up his mind when he don’t know exactly what he would

be at; and so is a woman, unless great lies have been told.

"Well, here he is—I've caught him at last," shouted Ariel, as he entered the hall where Catalina sat enjoying the sweet south breeze that gathered coolness as it sailed up the river.

"What, uncle—the pigeons?" And the young lady smiled at the recollection of the morning's disaster.

"No; the goose," replied Ariel, bursting into a great laugh at his own happy rejoinder.

Reader, art thou a modest, bashful, or what is still more deplorable, a sheepish young person, as proud as Lucifer, and with feelings more wakeful and skittish than a wild partridge? and hast thou ever been made the object of laughter? If so, thou wilt be able to enter into the agonies of Sybrandt, as he stood smarting under the consciousness that he cut rather a ridiculous figure. No one can ever know what a man suffers in such a situation, except persons of the temperament I have described. Else, the most ill-natured, malignant being that was ever created would be careful not to play rudely upon an instrument so easily disposed to tormenting discords. There are thousands of young persons, all of the higher order of intellect, who, in the days of their probation, before their hearts are seared in the fires of indulgence, or deadened by disappointments, suffer more from the careless disregard to their feelings, and the thoughtless ridicule indulged in by the domestic circle in which they move, than from all other causes combined.

It was thus with Sybrandt. His apprehensive pride whispered in his suspicious ear, that his cousin had

sent for him to make sport with his infirmity. His mind lost its poise, and his faculties became suspended, as he stood, the image of stupid insensibility, at the moment his heart and brain were pregnant with feelings which, (could he have rallied the confidence to utter them), would have astounded his uncle, and waked in the kind bosom of Catalina respect and commiseration. As it was, she considered him a conceited bookworm, whose neglect of her society and marked avoidance arose from indifference to her person and contempt for her understanding. From the moment she entertained this conviction, he became an object of consequence in her eyes, and she resolved either to overcome this dislike or insensibility, or revenge the injured dignity of womanhood, by worrying his self-esteem and laughing at his airs of superiority.

Sybrandt stood twirling his hat, immersed in a chaos of conflicting feelings that took away all presence of mind, when Ariel slapped him on the shoulder, in his good-humoured boisterous way, and roared out, in a voice that caused the young man to drop his hat on the floor,—

“Zounds! man, can’t you speak? Why don’t you ask your cousin what she wants. — Hey — a-hem! If I was a young fellow like you, I’d have got it all out of her in less than no time. But I suppose I’d better leave the young couple together—a-hem!” And, with a most significant look, he departed to teach the dominie how to ring his pigs’ noses.

This allusion to the “young couple” affronted Catalina, and made poor Sybrandt feel more silly than ever. At length the young lady, assuming an air of taunting distance, masked under affected humility, said—

“Mr. Westbrook, I am afraid, is offended at the liberty I have taken in sending for him.”

“Indeed — I — I could not imagine — I was surprised — I —” and here his tongue cleaved to the roof of his mouth.

“I beg pardon for the liberty; but I thought it might be agreeable to Mr. Westbrook to go with a little party to-morrow to the island, if the day is fair. But, I suppose — I see you can’t leave your books. These little rural pastimes are unworthy a philosopher:” — and she concocted her rosy lips and ivory teeth into a pretty sneer, as she uttered this truly female oration.

“I would — I will — I should like much to go with you — but —” and here the demon of sheepishness conjured up a hundred reasons for not going.

“O, very well — I suppose Mr. Westbrook thinks the diversions of common folks, especially young women who don’t understand Greek, beneath his notice.”

Sybrandt was a little nettled at this, and anger soon overcomes timidity.

“Miss Vancour is inclined to be satirical, I will not say ill-natured, to-day.”

“Wonderful! Why, he has found his voice. Mr. Westbrook condescends to speak to a poor damsel. Surely he mistakes her for one of the seven wise men of Greece. How could you let down your dignity so!” — and the lady made him a low obeisance.

Sybrandt’s face and heart grew hot with a sense of insult.

“Miss Vancour does not do me justice if she thinks me proud. She cannot know my feelings, nor enter

into the mortifications I suffer daily, from the consciousness that I — that I —” and here his proud shy spirit shrunk from revealing the mysteries of his deportment. He remained silent and embarrassed; yet his face glowed with an expression, and his eye kindled with a fire, Catalina had never seen lighted there before. She was delighted to discover that he had feelings which it was in her power to awaken. It was a proof that he did not think her altogether beneath his notice.

“What is it, then,” said she, “that keeps you from my father’s house, where you are always welcome; from the society of the young men who would be proud of your company; and from all share in the amusements of the girls, my friends? If it is not pride, what is it?”

At one moment Sybrandt determined to give his cousin an analysis of his emotions; the next he recoiled from the disclosure; and the conflict of opposing impulses threw his mind into such a confusion, that for the soul of him he could not utter a connected sentence.

“Well, well, Mr. Westbrook,” said Catalina, after waiting the event of this struggle, “I don’t wish to inquire into your secrets, nor to persuade you to go any where against your will. You had better ask the dominie’s permission. I won’t keep you any longer from your studies.” And the young lady left the room, saying within herself, “He is not such a senseless block, after all, as I thought him. A man that can blush must have a heart, certainly.”

Sybrandt could have knocked his head against a stone wall. He buried himself in the woody solitudes,

where he dwelt, with exaggerated agony, on the preposterous figure he had made in this interview, the laugh of Ariel, and the mockery of his cousin. He called himself fool, oaf, idiot, in his very heart, and it be may fairly questioned whether any pang he afterward experienced, arising from actual suffering or misfortune, ever came up to the intensity of this his present feeling of mortified pride and insulted sensibility, combined with the consciousness that he had made himself ridiculous.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MORNING'S SMILES, THE EVENING'S TEARS.

THE next morning, Ariel, who was to be commander-in-chief of the party to the island, came over, and found Sybrandt half-willing, half-afraid to accompany them. Never man was so busy, so important, and so delighted as the good Ariel, at having something to do for a whole day. Blessed indeed, yea, thrice blessed is he whom trifles can make happy. It is this which forms the bliss of childhood and the consolation of old age, each of which finds its appropriate enjoyments in an exemption from the serious labours and oppressive anxieties of the world's great business.

It was a cheerful and inspiring morning as ever shone upon the rich plains of the happy Hudson — happy in being the chosen river on whose bosom floats the tide of fashion to and fro, and on whose delicious borders dwell in rustic competency thousands of contented human beings, finding the reward of their labours in the fruitions of a blameless life and a quiet spirit. The day was such a one as I myself prefer to all others ; when the sun diffuses his influence through a gauzy veil of semi-transparent clouds, which temper his rays into a mild genial warmth, that, while it takes, perhaps, from the vigour of the body, communicates to the mind a delicious and luxurious aptitude for the indulgence of the gentler emotions. In such days,

and through such a medium, the beauties of nature exhibit only their loveliest features, and display their greatest varieties of shade and colouring; the winds are hushed, the waters, smooth and glassy; the foliage wears a fleecy softness; the hills appear more beautiful; the mountains, magnified in the misty vagueness of distance, seem blended with the skies; the differing tints of green that deck the bosom of the earth become more distinct yet more harmonious than when basking in the glare of the sun; and every sound that meets the ear, like every object that attracts the eye, partakes in the gentle harmony that reigns all around. It is in the remembrance of such scenes in after-life, and amid the struggles, hopes, and disappointments which checker the course of manhood, that we are apt to contrast our present cares with our former enjoyments, exaggerating both, and making a false estimate of the different periods of an existence, which, if we fairly hold the balance, will be found pretty much the same in all its various changes, from the cradle to the grave.

Our party consisted of Master-commandant Ariel, chief manager, factotum, &c., (as busy as a bee, as noisy as a katy-did, and as merry as a cricket), Catalina, Sybrandt, and some half a score of the beaux and belles of Albany, who had come to the mansion-house bright and early in the morning, all dressed in neat and simple attire, befitting a ramble among the wild roses and clambering vines of the favoured isle. This little paradise, to speak in learned phrase, was an alluvial formation of times long past, composed of the rich spoils of the surrounding lands, deposited by the river. It was as level as the surface of the stream

in which it was embosomed, and covered with a carpet of rich, luxuriant verdure, which, when it was not pastured, gave to the scythe a glorious harvest three times a year. On every side and all around, the banks were fringed with the light silvery foliage of the water-willows, mingled with tufts of sweetbrier, and growths of nameless wild flowers of every hue and various odour; and canopied here and there with vines, whose long tendrils sometimes bent down and waved to and fro on the gliding waters as they passed slowly by. Within this leafy barrier was nothing but a green sward, shaded at irregular intervals by the vast giants of the alluvial growth—elms and sycamores, of such towering majesty that they overlooked the gentle eminences which bounded the flats on either side. The witching murmurs of the waters, as they glided along under the willow branches and nodding vines, mingled with the chorus of a thousand birds, who remained all summer in undisturbed possession; and though the pipe of the shepherd was never heard in these pleasant abodes, it was aptly supplied by the music of harmonious nature, the rippling waves, and the warblers of the woodland.

Under the skilful guidance of the active and vivacious Ariel, the little party arrived at the scene of their anticipated pleasures, all gay and happy, save our friend Sybrandt, who, from the moment he joined the group, felt the spell of the demon besetting him sorely. The other young men were, indeed, quite as awkward, and without his knowledge and acquirements; but they made an excellent figure, notwithstanding, and performed their parts with a gay, gallant frankness, such as woman in every situation loves.

They had lived in the world at Albany, mixed in its business, and dissipated their self-love in the pursuit of various objects, while poor Sybrandt had passed his youth in nursing the offspring of solitude — sensibility, pride, and selfishness. It is social intercourse alone that, by calling him off from self-contemplation, and making it necessary to remember and to administer to the wants or the enjoyment of others, can make man happy himself, and an instrument of happiness to his fellows.

When they came to the riverside, where lay the little boat which was to take them to the island, Sybrandt had sworn to himself that he would offer his hand to Catalina to assist her in embarking. But it was so long before he could screw himself up to the direful feat, that one of the Albany lads, more valiant as well as alert, was beforehand with him. A bashful man is like a tiger; he makes one effort, and, if that fails, slinks away to his jungle, and essays not another. I myself have my own experience to vouch for this; having, in the far-off days of my gallantry, full many a time and oft, in dining out, gathered myself together with a chivalrous ferocity to ask the lady of the feast for the honour of a glass of wine with her. But, alas! if peradventure the lady listened not to my first demonstration, I was prone to relapse into an utter and incurable incapacity to repeat the mighty effort. The sound of my voice died suddenly, and word spake I nevermore. So was it with master Sybrandt, who, having expended his powder in a flash of the pan, sunk only the lower for the exertion he had made.

The party landed, and pursued their recreation in separate groups, or couples, as chance or inclination

prompted. In those days of innocence and simplicity — and, thanks to Heaven, it is so still in our happy country — young people of different sexes could share the enjoyments of a rural ramble, in parties or in pairs, without the remotest idea of impropriety, and without waking a single breath of scandal. If there be any thing in the harmony, the repose, the fascinating and quiet beauties of nature that excites to love, it is gentle and virtuous love, an awakening impulse, rather than an ungovernable passion; and if perchance it works to final mischief, it is rather from accident than purpose — nature than depravity. It is not here that the sensual passions acquire their overpowering energies; but at midnight revels, where dazzling lights, artificial splendours, seducing music, high-seasoned viands, and luxurious wines, pamper the senses, and swell the imagination to exaggerated conceptions of pleasure, which carry us away we know not and we care not whither. Long may it be before it is the fashion to abridge the freedom of virgins, and extend that of wives, in our country.

Catalina having carried her point in making Sybrandt one of the party, was in a rather better humour with him than usual. She plagued him now and then in various sly ways, and sometimes raised a laugh at his expense. The first fine edge of the feelings, fortunately for mankind, both in pleasure and pain, is worn off by the first enjoyment and the first suffering. Were it not so — but I am insensibly becoming a moralist, when I only aspire to story-telling. Sybrandt already felt, like a musical instrument, in better tune for being played upon, and two or three times caught himself actually enjoying the scene and

the festivity of his companions. The ridicule of women sometimes makes bold men only more confident; and I have known a very pattern of modesty made downright saucy by the freedoms of others. Indeed, there is not in the world so impudent a being as a shy man forced out of his shyness. The impulse carries him to the opposite extreme. The bent of Sybrandt's mind had, however, been too continuous and too rigid to be relaxed all at once.

I pity the most exalted of created beings who cannot feel the inspiration of the balmy air, the melody, and the smiles of nature; for he can have neither sensibility nor imagination. It was not so with Sybrandt. Though apparently a most unpromising pupil for the school of romance, there were, if I mistake not, certain springs of action and certain latent fires hidden and buried in his head and heart, which only required to be touched or lighted to make him a far other being than he seemed just now. As the morning passed, he insensibly began to feel less awkward, and his shyness gradually wore away. He ventured to speak to some of the damsels, and finally had the unparalleled intrepidity to attach himself to the side of his cousin in a stroll under the vines and willows that skirted the shores of the little island.

By degrees the affections which nature had implanted in him opened and expanded, like the seeds which lie dormant in the deep shades of the forest for years, until, the trees being cut down, the sunbeams waken them to life and vegetation. The emotions of his heart for a while overpowered his long-cherished diffidence, and lent to his tongue an eloquence that pleased, while it surprised, Catalina. The stores of imagery

which long reading and contemplation had gathered in his mind came to light, without study or effort, in striking observations, tender associations, and sparkles of a rich and glowing fancy. Catalina listened with astonishment to the animated statue; and, as she looked him in the face while pouring out the treasures of his mind, and saw the divinity that flashed in his eyes, she once or twice detected herself in thinking Sybrandt almost as handsome as an aide-de-camp. He, too, felt elevated in his own estimation; for the first time in his life he had listened to his own voice without feeling his heart beat with apprehension, and for the first time he could look back upon an hour spent in the society of a woman, without a pang of the keenest mortification.

“Sybrandt,” at length said Catalina, “why don’t you talk so every day?”

“Because every day is not like to-day; nor are you, my cousin, always what you are now.”

A silence ensued, from which they were roused by the cheerful, joy-inspiring shouts of Ariel, who had prepared his collation, and was summoning all the rambling lads and lasses to come and partake of the blessings of his prudent forethought. To him, eating was an affair of the first consequence; he never joined a party, either of business or pleasure, without first reducing it to a certainty that there would be no starvation attending it; and it was almost as affecting as a last dying speech to hear him relate the melancholy story of the ruin of a brace of the finest wood-ducks he ever saw, by the “damned stupid folly” of his cook, who boiled them in a pot. The good Ariel had spread his stores on a snow-white

table-cloth of ample dimensions, laid upon the rich greensward, beneath a canopy of vines that clambered over the tops of a clump of sassafras, whose aromatic buds sent forth a grateful fragrance. Here he marshalled his forces with great discretion, placing the lads and lasses alternately around the rural repast, and enjoining upon each of the former the strictest attention to his nearest neighbour. As to himself, he never could sit still where there was room for action. He curvetted around the little circle like a frolic spaniel; cracked his jokes, and laughed only the louder when nobody joined him; helped himself, and ate, and talked, all at the same time, with a zest, an hilarity, and an honest frankness, that communicated themselves to all about him, infecting them with a contagious merriment. The birds chirped over their heads, the flowers grew beneath their feet, the mild summer breezes played upon their cheeks, hope glowed in their hearts, and youth and health were their handmaids;—why then should they not laugh and be merry?

But a plague on Nature! She is a female, after all, and there is no trusting her. As thus they sat, unheeding all but themselves and the present moment, she had been at work unnoticed by the joyous crew, gathering into one great mass a pack of dark rolling clouds along the western horizon. The banks of the islet were, as we said before, fringed with trees and shrubbery and tangled vines, that quite hid the opposite shores, making it a little world within itself. The tempest gathering in the West had therefore escaped the notice of the party, until the moment when a burst of merriment was interrupted by a flash

of lightning, and a quick, sharp crash of thunder. When the Creator speaks, all nature is silent; and if, as some suppose, the leaping lightning is the quick glancing of his angry eye, the thunder the threatening of his voice, no wonder if every sound is hushed when they break forth from the pitchy darkness of the heavens. The laugh ceased; the birds became silent in their leafy bowers; the trees stilled their sweet whisperings; the insects chirped no longer, and the river murmured no more. There was a dead pause in the air, the earth, and the waters, save when the Creator of them all spoke from the depths of his vast obscurity.

The merry-makers glanced at each other in silence, and in silence sat, until Ariel ventured to clear his voice with an, "a-hem!", which, to say the truth, lacked much of its wonted energy and clearness. Sybrandt gained a position whence he could look abroad, and came back, running, to announce that a thunder-storm was coming on, rapidly — so rapidly that it would be impossible to cross the river and gain the nearest house in time to escape its fury. The damsels looked at the young men, and the young men looked at the damsels. One had on her best hat, another a new shawl, a third her holiday chintz gown, and each and all wore some favourite piece of finery, which, though peradventure Dolly the cook and Betty the chambermaid would scorn to wear, even on week-days, in this age of unparalleled improvement, was still dear to their unsophisticated hearts. The boys too, as they were called, and still are called among the old lords of the land, had on their Sunday gear, which, as they never ran in debt to the tailor, it behooved them to nurse with special care. What was

to be done in this sore dilemma? — for now the quick, keen flashes, the equally sharp crashes that came with them, and the dead, dull calm that intervened, announced that the rain and the tempest were nigh.

Ariel was as busy as an assistant-alderman at a fire, and about as useful. Being a man who was always in a hurry when there was no occasion for haste, it may be naturally supposed that, when there was occasion, he would be in such a great hurry that his resolves would tread upon one another's heels, or impede their operations by running athwart each other and breaking their heads. And so, indeed, it turned out; he was ten times more busy than when he had nothing to do; swore at the lads for not doing something; suggested a hundred impracticable things; and concluded, good man!, by wishing with all his soul they were safely housed in the old mansion.

Catalina had been brought up at boarding-school in the fear of thunder. The school-mistress, indeed, always encouraged the young ladies, by precept, not to be frightened; but she never failed to disappear in a thunder-storm, and was one time discovered between two feather-beds, almost smothered to death. It is to be regretted that this natural and proper feeling of awe which accompanies the sublime phenomena of nature should degenerate into fright or irrational superstition. Divested of these, the approach of a thunder-storm is calculated to waken the mind to the most lofty associations with the great Being who charges and discharges this grand artillery, and to exalt the imagination into the regions of loftiest contemplation. But fear is a grovelling sentiment, which monopolizes the mind, debases the physical man, and

shuts out every feeling allied to genuine piety and faith.

Suddenly an idea struck Sybrandt, which was instantly adopted and put into execution. The boat, a broad, flat skiff, was drawn up the bank, and placed bottom upwards, with one side supported by sticks, and the other reclining on the ground towards the West, so that the rain might run off in that direction. The few minutes which intervened between this operation and the bursting of the torrent of rain were employed by the young men in covering the open spaces about the sides of the boat with grass and branches, as well as the time would admit. There was only space enough under this shelter for the young women, though Ariel managed to find himself a place among them. He was in the main a good-natured, kind-hearted man, but he did not like being out in a storm, any more than his neighbours. The young men stood cowering under a canopy of thick vines, which shaded the boat and a little space besides. It was observed that Sybrandt placed himself nearest that end of the boat under which Catalina was sheltered, and that he was particular in the disposition of the grass and branches in that quarter.

A few, a very few minutes of dead silence on the part of our little group intervened before the tempest sent forth its hoards of wind and rain, smiting the groaning trees, and deluging the thirsty earth, till it could drink no more, but voided the surplus into the swelling stream, that began anon to rise and roar in angry violence. This storm was for a long time traditionary, for its terrible violence; and for more than half a century people talked of the incessant

flashes of the lightning, the stunning and harsh violence of the thunder, the deluge of rain, the hurricane which accompanied it, the lofty trees that were either split with bolts or prostrated by the wind, and the damage done by the sudden swelling of the river on that memorable day.

Those under the boat fared indifferently well; but the others were in a few moments wet to the skin. The flexible willows bent down, to let the storm pass over them; but the sturdy elms and sycamores stood stiff to the blast, that wrung their arms from their bodies, and scattered them in the air like straws and feathers. The rushing winds and the roaring of the troubled waters were mingled with incessant flashes of lightning, accompanied by those quick, sharp explosions of thunder that proclaim the near approach of the electric power. At length the party was roused by a peal that seemed to have rent the vault of heaven, and beheld with terror a huge sycamore, not a hundred yards off, directly in front of them, shivered from top to bottom like a reed. The explosion for a moment stilled the tempest of rain, during which interval the cloven trunk stood trembling and nodding, like one suddenly struck by the hand of death. Another moment, and the winds resumed their empire, the stout monarch of the isle fell to the ground with a crash, and the force of Omnipotence was demonstrated in the instantaneous destruction of a work which long ages had brought to maturity.

The young women screamed, and the youths shuddered, as they beheld this giant of nature yielding in an instant to Divinity. But soon they were drawn off to the consideration of a new danger. It is well

known how sudden, nay, almost instantaneous, is the swelling of our rivers, especially near their sources, and where they traverse a hilly or mountainous region. The little isle in which our scene is laid was but a few feet above the ordinary level of the stream, which now began to dash its waves beyond the usual barrier, until at length the situation of the party became extremely critical. The land had become less safe than the water, and immediate measures were taken to prepare for the inundation, by turning the boat upon her bottom again. The party was arranged on the benches to the best advantage, and the young men prepared to ply the oars the moment the boat was floated off. Soon the tremendous torrent rolled over the surface of the whole island in one mighty and turbid volume, speckled with white foam; and the boat was borne off by the surge with the swiftness of an arrow. The difficulty was to escape the trees and bushes, which still reared their heads above the flood, since it was obvious that nothing could preserve the skiff but her being kept from the slightest interruption in her course. The great object, therefore, was to avoid every obstacle, and to keep her head directly down the stream, till they met with some little nook or cove, where the current was less violent.

In times of jeopardy the master-spirit instinctively takes the lead, and the meaner ones instinctively yield obedience. Ever since the coming of the storm, Sybrandt had seemed a new being, animated by a newly-awakened soul. The excitement of the scene had by degrees caused him to forget his shyness; and now the presence of danger and the necessity of exertion roused into action those qualities which neither him-

self nor others had been aware that he possessed. He who had trembled at the idea of being introduced into a drawing-room, and shrunk from the encounter of a woman's smiling eye, now stood erect in the composure of unawed manhood, with a firm hand and a steady eye, guiding the little skiff through conflicting currents, almost as skilfully as a veteran Mississippi boatman. The rest sat still in the numbness of irrepressible apprehension. Even the busy Ariel was motionless in his seat, and his active tongue silent as the grave. But neither human skill nor human courage could prevail for any length of time over the fury of the waters, every moment aggravated by new accessions. In turning a point, round which the current whirled with increased impetuosity, the boat struck the edge of an old stump of a tree just beneath the surface, and was upset in an instant. Fortunately for some, though, alas! not for all, the stream made a sudden inflexion immediately below the point, forming a cove, where it subsided into comparative repose. It was in making for this harbour that the boat unfortunately encountered the stump, which, as before stated, was not visible above the water. The accident was fatal to two of the innocent girls and one of the young men, who sat in the bow of the boat, which, unfortunately, as she overturned, sheered out into the stream, and launched them into the main force of the freshet. Their bodies were found a day or two afterward, many miles below. The others, with the exception of Catalina, were shot directly, and in an instant, by the sudden eddy made by the current, into the quiet cove, where they were all preserved. Catalina fared worse, at first. Less strong, and less inured to

the sports and perils of rural life, she became insensible the moment the accident occurred, and would have quickly perished, had not Sybrandt swum to the edge of the turbulent whirlpool where she was floating, and brought her safely to the land.

Sadly the remnant of our little party returned to their respective homes without their lost companions, and sadly they contrasted the beauty of the quiet genial morning, and the happy anticipations that beckoned them forward to sportful revelry, with the uproar of nature, and the gloomy shadows of the evening, which closed in darkness, sorrow, and death. The remembrance of this scene, and of the conduct of Sybrandt, not only before but during the storm, and in the hour of her extreme peril, was often afterward called to mind by Catalina, and not unfrequently checked her inclination, sometimes to laugh at, sometimes to be downright angry with, her shamefaced, awkward cousin.

I need not dwell upon the anxiety of the father and mother of our heroine, nor on that of the good Dennis, who, in the midst of his fears, could not help crying out against and sparing not this newfangled custom of making parties for the island, though both tradition and history avouch that these sports were coeval with the commencement of our happy era of honest simplicity. Suffice it to say, that the good parents received their only child as one a second time bestowed upon them by the bounty of Heaven, and that they were full of gratitude to Sybrandt,—whose inspiration seemed now to have departed from him. Instead of expressing his joy at having been instrumental in preserving Catalina, and showing his sensibility to

the gratitude of her parents, he became disconcerted, silent, stultified — and finally vanished away, no one knew whither. We must not omit to record that from this time forward the worthy Ariel attended the Dominie's sermons regularly twice every Sunday, which was a custom he had never followed before, inasmuch as he had a most sovereign propensity to falling asleep and disturbing the congregation by snoring.

CHAPTER V.

AN IRRUPTION OF BOILED LOBSTERS.

It was many days before Catalina again saw Master Sybrandt, who, sooth to say, shrunk from the usual consequences of a good deed, as skittishly as some worthies do from those of a bad one. Catalina said to the woman within her, "He is giving himself airs—he thinks I will send for him again—but he'll be very much mistaken this time—I hate such proud, stupid people!" And she looked in the glass, and was right well-pleased at what she saw there. When Sybrandt at last overcame his old enemy, and ventured into what to him was worse than the jaws of a hungry lion, Catalina, affronted at his long absence under these particular circumstances, which seemed to indicate that he considered the saving of her life a matter of no sort of consequence, treated him with considerable disdain. Sybrandt, who could digest twenty folios of metaphysics more readily than he could comprehend the mind of a woman, and who never dreamed ✓ that his absence or presence was noticed by any human being in the shape of a young lady, became only the more shy and embarrassed at this reception. He thought, to a certainty, his cousin despised him, and he was one of those that never court favour where they expect contempt. Thus they continued to misunderstand each other, and thus, it was probable, would they continue to the end of their lives.

Not long after the adventure of the island, an incident occurred which occasioned a great sensation, not only in the city of Albany, but for many miles around. This was the arrival of a regiment of British troops from New York, in consequence of expected hostilities between France and England, whose wretched rivalry generally involved the four quarters of the globe in war and bloodshed. A large portion of the officers of this regiment were gay young men without families, and the belles and mothers of the belles in and about Albany saw, in the new-comers, subjects on which to exercise the influence of the charms of the one and the arts of the other. One of the most mortifying results of the colonial state is, that it invariably generates on the part of the colonists a habit of giving way, if not a feeling of inferiority, and on the part of natives of the parent state an arrogant disregard of propriety and decorum when among them. The men of the United Colonies, with the exception, perhaps, of those of Virginia and South Carolina, did not, in the days of which we are speaking, assert that equality which they are now authorized to maintain wheresoever they go; and the women, especially those who aspired to the *bon-ton*—with sorrow and mortification we record it—by the eagerness with which they sought, and the unconcealed vanity with which they received, the attentions of gentlemen from the old country, contributed most materially to the depression of their own countrymen as well as to the exaltation of foreign adventurers. Nothing indeed so affects the relative dignity and virtue of the two sexes, as the estimation in which they hold each other. Where women are neglected by their countrymen, or where men are neg-

lected by their countrywomen, in their admiration for strangers, the result will probably be the degradation of both in the eyes of each other and in the estimation of those whose attentions they court. This silly habit of admiring foreign fashions, foreign countries, and foreigners, became so deeply implanted in the minds of the good provincials of the "Old Thirteen," that it still retains its influence in some degree, as may be perceived in the docility with which we are accustomed to give the preference to moderate talent in a stranger, over shining merit in a native; and to bow to the decisions of ignorant pretenders, the sole weight of whose opinions is derived from their passage across the ocean. Like wine which has made a voyage to China, opinions are held to be improved by a similar adventure; and folly becomes venerable, when we can trace it to the reverend errors of declining age across the water. Hospitality ennobles a nation, but only when it springs from higher motives than the silly vanity of entertaining people of more consequence than ourselves.

The colonel of the newly-arrived regiment had attained that period of life when vanity and ambition take the place of love. He was gallant and well-born; he tacked "honourable" to his name, and that alone was sufficient to consecrate him in the eyes of the provincial ladies. He belonged to that race of beaux which has long been extinct as a species, although we now and then see some vestiges in the wreck of an old soldier, whose wit and vivacity have survived his very self, and still sparkle from the mere force of long habit. His name was Sydenham; he was somewhat of a coxcomb; and his exterior was

prepossessing, especially in a red coat and epaulettes. His courage was undoubted; his principles not at all doubtful, for he held the point of honour to consist in meeting the consequences of his actions, good or bad, without flinching. He did not want for a reasonable degree of scholarship, and was not ignorant of books; but his greatest acquisition consisted in a consummate knowledge of the world, a manner which enabled him to be particularly pleasing whenever he chose, and a pliability of principles which made it singularly easy for him to choose the path most agreeable for the time being. The rest of the officers were nearly all alike, as much so as so many boiled lobsters. They all wore red coats, and all thought themselves of a different species from the honest burghers, whose wine they condescended to drink, and whose wives and daughters they favoured with their attentions, in proportion as the liquor was good and the ladies handsome.

The mansion-house of the Vancours had ever been open to the footsteps of all respectable strangers, and especially to the military men, who frequently sojourned there on their passage from New York to the frontier posts and back again. They came and went as they pleased, and were received and entertained with an easy liberality, of which we see some remains still lingering in the Southern States, and making head against the silent inroads of heartless and selfish ostentation. Independently of the hospitality of the house, the situation of the elder Vancour as a public man, together with his extensive acquaintance with the interests of the colony, and his singular influence over the Indians, naturally made his house the resort

of the principal officers of the government, with whom his opinions always had great weight.

Accordingly, we soon find the magnate and his satellites as it were domesticated at the mansion-house, riding the colonel's horses, feasting on his excellent fare, drinking his old wine, pronouncing him a decent sort of an old customer, and never quizzing the good gentleman but at their messes. Colonel Sydenham singled out Catalina, as the object of his devoirs; and the others found rural goddesses among the daughters of the Van Amburghs, the Van Outerstoups, the Volckmaars, and the Vervalens of the neighborhood, who could talk English with their eyes, if not with their tongues. It was not then the fashion to pay any other than the most respectful attentions to married women; and, if it had been, there was something in the appearance, manners, and character of the good Madam Vancour, a staid and sober dignity and quiet self-possession, that gained the respect even of folly and impudence combined. One of the young officers of the regiment was complaining one day that he could not find any body to fall in love with. "Why don't you make love to Madam Vancour?" said another, jestingly. "Madam Vancour!" replied he; "I should as soon think of throwing a glass of wine in the face of the king."

The arrival and sojourning of these gay sparks created a mighty stir in that part of the country, and soon produced great innovations in the simple habits of the people. Independently of the general laxity of morals which is so often the consequence of the roving, uncertain life of a soldier, and his freedom from the restraints of home, there is always attached to every

considerable body of troops a train of vicious and worthless people of both sexes. Corruption follows in the path of Mars; and it is pretty certain that nothing makes more fearful inroads upon the virtues of a people than continued association with men whose only business is fighting. One would suppose that the proverbial uncertainty of a soldier's life would generate habits of sobriety, reflection, and decorum; but, so far from this, it is sufficiently evident that it produces a quite contrary effect. There is no occasion on which we see such careless, high-wrought, and high-seasoned conviviality, as in an army the night preceding a battle, in which every man is to peril his life to the uttermost.

The pastoral and sylvan deities of the shades, and the lazy river-gods, who slept in quiet in their crystal basins, save when the breaking up of the ice in spring or the swelling of the river in the pelting storm disturbed their repose, were anon astounded at the frolicsome racket of these new-comers. Heretofore not a dog dared bark after eight o'clock in their quiet retreats, except as a signal that the wild man or the wild beast was coming. But now, "Preserve us!" as the good Dominie Stettinius exclaimed with lifted hands, — "half the night is spent — yea, even to nine and ten o'clock — in dancings and junketings." The cows stood lowing in the sober twilight, in expectation of the dilatory milkmaid, who was peradventure adorning herself, as the victim was erst dressed in flowers to be sacrificed to some gross heathen divinity. The sober Dutch lads, who whilom considered the dissipation of a Christmas sleigh-ride the summit of delight, now were wont to steal at midnight from the

dormitory where the watchful cares of the good father had seen them "quietly inurned," to waste their time and health, and spend their money, in revels that the sun saw and blushed at when he rose above the golden tops of the eastern hills. The stout intrenchments behind which our Dutch ancestors in other quarters so strongly and obstinately maintained their manners and habits, almost down to the present time, were gradually sapped or stormed, and the good Dominie Stettinius stood aghast to behold the backsliding propensities of the youths and maidens of his hitherto docile flock.

He forthwith took arms to oppose this disastrous invasion of his hitherto peaceful domain—I mean such arms alone as comported with his age, his habits, and his sacred function. Casting aside the chastened zeal with which he had hitherto maintained and enforced obedience among his tranquil rustic hearers, he arrayed himself in the mighty words of reprehension, threatening, and denunciation. Learned, eloquent, and virtuous, he poured forth the stores of his intellect and the enthusiasm of his soul in strains of rich and affecting simplicity, that would have done honour to the primitive reformers. But, alas! what can the tongues of angels do, when example, temptation, and opportunity, knock at the threshold of the human heart, peep in at the windows, and whisper their seductions through the very key-holes? Some, doubtless,—and especially the more aged people, whose passions reposed upon the memory of the past,—were checked in their downhill career by the pious eloquence of the good dominie; but, for the young, the thoughtless, and the madcap boys and girls—many, very

many of them long lived to rue the day that saw the regiment of redcoats pitch its white, innocent-looking tents among the rich meadows of the matchless Hudson.

CHAPTER VI.

A BEAU OF THE OLD REGIME.

COLONEL SYDENHAM was a veteran beau of the old school, which, after all, I think was not a little superior to the present standard of dandyism. There was a courtesy, a polish, a lofty deference to the ladies, which, whether originating in vanity or a nobler feeling, was still the source of many attractive qualifications, and formed a charming ingredient in social intercourse. The little stiffnesses and formalities which accompanied this style of manners were, certainly, preferable to the careless and abrupt familiarity, or boorish neglect, which a preposterous deference to fashion has since consecrated as high-breeding and gentlemanly ease. The colonel had served in India, which was a fortunate circumstance, as it enabled him to ascribe his gray hairs, and the evident debility of his person, to the effects of a climate which, as he frequently observed, seldom failed to produce an appearance of premature old age. "I was gray at twenty," said the colonel, who never would use spectacles or carry a walking stick on any occasion, though never man stood in greater need of both these useful auxiliaries. He was always deeply smitten with some youthful belle or other, whose attentions he delighted to monopolize, more from the gratification of an habitual vanity, than from a warmer or nobler sentiment. On the whole, however, he was a

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singularly agreeable man; and, in spite of his age, always made a figure, and was welcomed in the society of both sexes. He was soon in special favour with high and low, rich and poor, young and old, with the single exception of the staid Dominie Stettinius, who penetrated his easiness of principles, and was not inclined to consider good manners an equivalent for good morals.

The colonel early made choice of Catalina as the recipient of his attentions. She was the fairest lady of the land in which he sojourned; she was unquestionably at the head of the beau-monde; and she was, prospectively, a great heiress, for she was the only child of a man who owned land enough to entitle him to vote at a German Diet. "If it should happen in the chapter of accidents," thought the colonel, "that this wood-dove were to be softened by my cooing, she will be worth marrying—if not, there will be no harm done. I am too much of a traveller to pine at the wilful vagaries of a woman's heart." Accordingly he entered the field as Catalina's devoted servant; and, as the strict rules of military etiquette forbade all interference with the commanding officer, the dapper majors, captains, lieutenants, and ensigns, always kept aloof while the colonel was making the agreeable to the young lady.

That she was not pleased and flattered with the distinction of being the belle of the first military man in the neighbourhood, who wore a red coat, and figured on the roll of heraldry, is what we will not say, for it might not be true. It would have been out of nature to be insensible to such honours—honours to which the gentle sex are prone to bow down, because

they are restricted from gaining any other laurels than those which they pluck from the brow of man. Their vanity and ambition can only be gratified, by leading in chains the conquerors of others; by associating their name and their destinies with the master-spirits who wield the powers of the earth, or with those who inherit distinction, as a fox does instinct, from a long line of ancestors. The colonel and Catalina were on the best possible terms, and, in no long time, the good people of the neighbourhood, who knew nothing of the attentions and courtesies authorized in the intercourse of the world, all agreed that it would be a match.

Among those who watched the progress of this intimacy, and with bitterness of heart, was Sybrandt Westbrook. The selfishness engendered by solitude and abstraction inclined him naturally to jealousy of a most perverse and ridiculous kind. He persuaded himself that he neither had, nor could ever have, any pretensions to Catalina; nay, he would have shrunk with shivering horror at the idea that she even suspected that his solitary hours and silent reveries were full of her, and only her. Yet he could not endure the remotest apprehension, much less the sight, of any, the slightest marks of preference for another. When in her society, he kept aloof, and left her entirely to the attentions of other men; yet her reception of these very courtesies cut him to the soul, and the recollection of them poisoned his solitary days and sleepless nights.

I do not wonder, as some have done, that women like your gay and enterprising admirers, who never put their timid delicacy to the task of making ad-

vances, or offering undue encouragement to their sheepishness. The province of the sex is to act always on the defensive in the strife of love, and nothing, I should imagine, is more provoking to their pride, or painful to their sensibility, than to be obliged to open their gates unsummoned, or even to step out of their intrenchments, in order to humour the coward bashfulness, or stubborn pride, of one who displays his affection by keeping at a distance, and makes himself agreeable by utter neglect.

Catalina, notwithstanding the cross-grained behaviour of Sybrandt, had a sort of intuitive perception, which is common to women and stands them in the stead of wisdom and philosophy, that he had a curious sort of abstract preference for her. This notion gave him an interest in her eyes, which caused her to watch him narrowly, at those times when she was receiving the gallant attentions of Colonel Sydenham with encouraging smiles. On these occasions she often fancied she could detect the boiling eddies through the apparently unruffled surface of stupid indifference. Sometimes her vanity, nay, her heart, was pleased with the discovery, for she remembered that she owed her life to him, and, with all his strange and wayward neglect and awkwardness, there were at long and rare intervals sparks of intellect and spirit, which indicated the hidden treasures overlaid by his rustic training. Sometimes, she resolved to try and bring him forward in the society of the newcomers, by kindness and attention; and again, she felt provoked to make him the subject of derision; while, more than once, without a thought of malignity or ill-nature, she put him on the rack. O ridicule!—

how often does it in its thoughtless gambols shed drops of vitriol, that blister where they light! There are souls in this world, incrustated with an outward shell of roughness or deformity, so keen, so sensitive, that the pointing of the finger is torture—the touch of scorn, madness. They sweat with inward agonies, at the moment when pride and timidity so closely veil their feelings, that, while their very hearts are bursting, they exhibit to the careless eye nothing but dull insensibility, or insufferable conceit. Such was this unhappy young man at this period. It was doubtful whether he would ever be known and properly appreciated, even by the friend of his heart, or the wife of his bosom; for he seemed destined never to be blessed with either.

Though he kept as much as possible away from the mansion-house, there were times when his wayward temper carried him there almost in spite of himself, or when the blustering, peremptory gayety of Ariel would force him from his moody solitudes into the pleasant social circle that was almost always to be found at Mr. Vancour's. One night a little gathering had met there, consisting of the gallant Colonel Sydenham, two or three of his officers, the noisy Ariel, and the daughters of half a score of the most substantial burghers of Albany. A furious thunder-storm had come on in the early part of the evening, and it was settled that the whole company should remain all night where they were, to the great delight of Uncle Ariel, whose soul expanded with indescribable satisfaction at the thought of a merry party and a social supper. These, or something like them, were the only stimulants that could keep the good soul awake

after the fowls had gone to roost. The colonel happened to be describing a dish of boiled fowl and rice common in the East Indies, which struck Ariel's fancy wonderfully. He disappeared shortly afterward, and continued to pass in and out of the room occasionally, without being particularly noticed by any body, for he never could be quiet when any thing was going forward about the house.

"Sybrandt," said Madam Vancour, with the good-natured intention of rousing him from the chaos of stupidity in which he had remained bewildered for a long time,—"Sybrandt, pray come and assist us in finding out what this means." They had gathered about the table, on which lay sundry books, into which some were looking, while others were talking about various matters.

"'Tis Greek," said one.

"'Tis Hebrew," said another.

"'Tis High-Dutch," said a third.

"'Tis Mohawk," said a fourth.

"Let me see," cried Ariel, who just at the moment entered with a face as red as fire. He pulled out his specs, rubbed them carefully, placed them across his little snub of a nose, and, planting himself in his usual determined position, with his short, sturdy drumsticks extended almost at right angles, began to pore over the mystery. He could make nothing of it.

"Colonel," cried he to Sydenham, who had rather affected to be deeply engaged with Cataliña,— "Colonel, here, damn it, you understand Hindoo, and all that; interpret for us."

The rest joined in the entreaty, and, the book being

handed to the colonel, he proceeded with great gravity to study it, upsidedown.

"Why, damn it, Colonel," shouted Ariel, "you're holding the book upsidedown. Here, take my spectacles; I see your eyes begin to fail you, as well as mine."

The colonel would rather have marched up to a loaded cannon than have used spectacles in the presence of any living soul but his valet, in whose discretion he placed unbounded reliance. In his solicitude to remedy the blunder so unceremoniously proclaimed by Ariel, he unluckily placed the cover of the book towards him, while he rejected the spectacles with a smile and a bow, both indicating that he had no occasion for them.

"Why, damn it, Colonel," shouted Ariel again, while breaking into an explosion of laughter; "why, zounds, you've got the book with the back side towards you this time. I insist on your taking my spectacles — I'm sure they will suit you exactly — you and I are just about of an age." And he continued to press the colonel to accept of them, till the unlucky gentleman could hardly command his faithful auxiliaries, the smile and the bow. It was, however, a maxim with him, from which he had never swerved for more than a score of years, never to show either anger or mortification in company. He contented himself with quietly handing the book to Sybrandt, saying he must acknowledge his inability to explain the passage — which, by the way, he had not been able to distinguish, from the failure of his eyes. But this was a secret he kept to himself, preferring rather to be thought ignorant than blind. All present gave

him credit for affecting to be unable to see, merely to disguise his not being able to interpret the enigma, which, as Sybrandt announced, was nothing more than an English proverb, printed in Greek characters, as we have seen practised, in the way of a grave quiz, in some of the old specimens of printing. There were few or no blue-stockings in the days we are now dealing with; but in no age of the world, and among no class of mankind, was it ever the case that learning and knowledge did not attract respect. They are independent of the changing fashions of place and time,—so intrinsically useful and respectable as to maintain their dignity at all periods, and with people of every degree; since it is impossible for the mind not to feel the obligation of being made wiser than it was before. This little incident raised Sybrandt in the scale of comparison with the colonel, especially in the estimation of Catalina, who inherited from her mother that decent respect for useful acquirements which is one of the best evidences of good-sense.

The colonel's spirits seemed to flag not a little after the adventure of the book, while those of poor Sybrandt gained a corresponding elevation; for it is the characteristic of such sensitive beings as he, to be about as unreasonably inflated as they are unreasonably mortified, by trifles which to others seem perfectly insignificant. Nevertheless, there was rather a dullness coming over the party, which, however, was soon diverted; for a pause in the storm without and the conversation within was interrupted by the loud sound of voices in the direction of the kitchen, a detached building about fifty yards in the rear of the house, with which it was connected by a covered way. The

voices seemed to be engaged in hot contention; and presently Ariel came bouncing into the room — his face in a blaze — exclaiming, “The old woolly-headed fool! — she knows no more about cooking than a Mohawk Indian.” The whole company expressed anxiety to know the cause of this violent irruption; and Ariel accordingly proceeded to explain.

CHAPTER VII.

AN INVASION OF STATE RIGHTS.

THERE reigned in the kitchen of Mr. Vancour an African queen, whose authority, by virtue of long and vigorous assertion, was paramount to that of the mistress of the establishment and all other persons. Her complexion was perfect, according to the standard of Guinea; for nothing in the apprehension of man, not even the personification of Madam Night, was so irresistibly black as the skin of Aunt Nauntje, as she was called by the family, young and old. She was the mother of three generations of blacks — I beg pardon — of people of colour — who all appertained to the establishment. The boys at the time of their birth were given to some one of the young white members of the family, to whom they continued especially attached all their lives; and the girls were in like manner considered the property of the young ladies, who attended strictly to their conduct, and taught them to be useful, as well as virtuous. They were all treated kindly, and as a part of the family; and there was something in the connexion of mutual services, mutual good-will, and mutual protection, thus established, that made the relation of master and slave, in those simple, honest times, one of the most endearing and respectable of all those which subsist between man and man. The slaves did not study metaphysics, nor

stultify themselves with dissertations on the relative claims of the two rival colours of the present day; but they were far more happy and moral, as well as better members of society, than the wretched victims of a rash and miscalculating philanthropy we see every day at the Police-Court. Their labours were not more heavy than those of the owners of themselves and of the soil which they cultivated; they worked in the same fields, or at the same employments; and, when they had given to their master the fruits of their youth and manhood, they found at his kitchen fireside a refuge for the evening of their days. They spent it neither in the poor-house nor the penitentiary.

It was gratifying in those days to see the interest which these old and faithful retainers took in the affairs of their master, and the manner in which they as it were identified their own characters and consequence with his. The master and mistress were not afraid to go a journey, and leave the house in charge of one of these; for they knew it would be even more carefully attended to than if they were at home. As for the poor people themselves, the idea of a separation of interests between them and their owners never entered their heads; and if it had, their hearts would have rejected the suggestion.

But to return to our narrative. Aunt Nauntje was despotic in that region which among the enlightened of the present day is considered as the terrestrial paradise, seeing that it pours forth the choicest of the blessings of this life. Need I say that I mean the kitchen? Where she acquired her art I know not, but tradition declares that the dishes she concocted

had a rich and triumphant relish, a rare *j'è ne sais quoi*, which tickled the palate mightily, and seduced the worthy Ariel into occasional imprudent feats of the trencher. Nay, we record on the same venerable authority, that William Burnet, his Britannic majesty's governor, captain-general, and *locum tenens* in the province of New York, being on a visit to the mansion-house, did incontinently luxuriate so lustily in the delights of a certain nondescript dish, the art of making which is lost in these degenerate days, that he fell asleep before the dessert.

The active Ariel, among his other accomplishments, such as grafting apple-trees, bleeding horses, and ringing pigs' noses, was an amateur in the noble art of cookery. He never could keep out of the kitchen when there was a feast in preparation; and many is the time Aunt Nauntje did violently expel him, by dint of flourishing the gridiron, the toasting-fork, or some such formidable weapon. Indeed, something like a feud raged between them, ever since Ariel had denounced her publicly, as "a stupid old fool of a Guinea nigger," for having committed the enormity of roasting wild pigeons without any stuffing.

When Ariel heard Colonel Sydenham describe the famous East India dish of boiled chickens and rice, which he did with a commendable minuteness, he pricked up his ears, and thought to himself he would go and make interest with Aunt Nauntje to surprise all present with a fac-simile. Accordingly, as I have before noted, he disappeared as soon as the colonel had finished his detail, and sallied forth for the empire of queen Nauntje, who was busily engaged in cook-

ing a jolly, old-fashioned meal, for a company of healthy, hearty folks, who had dined at one o'clock, and could therefore afford to eat supper. The inroad was by no means agreeable to her majesty, but respect for the brother of her master always kept her within bounds, except on the spur of some immediate cause of irritation.

"Aunt Nauntje, my good soul," said Ariel, "I want you to try your hand at a famous dish I have just heard of from Colonel Sydenham."

"Ah," said Nauntje, "Massa *Auriel* always some crinkum-crankum in he head, 'bout new dishes. Well, what is he?"

"Why, a dish of boiled fowl and rice, dressed with curry. You know the colonel gave you a bottle the other day."

Nauntje began to spit. "Curry — eh! — stuff just fit for a hog or an Indian."

"Well, but you know, Nauntje," said Ariel, coaxingly — "You know, damn it, you are not obliged to eat it. Now do, my dear soul, try, for the sake of the colonel, will you?"

"Colonel, ah! — wish him a hundred miles off, wid all he crew of redcoats; eat massa out of house an' hum, bum-by."

"Well, but your mistress will be pleased with it — come now, you clever old soul, and, the next time I go to Albany, I'll bring you a new pipe, a paper of tobacco, and a row of pins."

To please her mistress, and get the reward promised by Ariel, Aunt Nauntje at length consented to try her skill at the outlandish dish, and Ariel was delighted beyond measure. He was in and out of the kitchen

every five minutes, giving directions and finding fault, until it was with great difficulty she refrained from having resort to violent measures. As it was, she almost broiled with indignation at this attempt to overrule and insult her in her own proper dominion. At length the great attempt was nearly brought to a crisis, and Ariel solicited and obtained permission to taste the eminent concoction. But what pen can depict his indignation when he discovered that, in spite of all his cautions and injunctions, Aunt Nauntje, who had a passion for onions, had poisoned the whole affair by a predominating infusion of that ungentle vegetable! Ariel was confounded, thunderstruck, and indignant. He ejected the villainous compound into the fire, exclaiming —

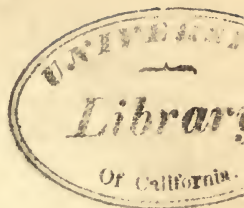
“I’ll be shot if the stupid old fool hasn’t put onions in it!”

Whereupon Aunt Nauntje forgot the new pipe, the paper of tobacco, and the row of pins. She seized the mortal gridiron, pursued Ariel with a speed which seemed almost supernatural when contrasted with her appearance of extreme old age, and drove him, as we have before related, triumphantly before her into the parlour; at the door of which she stopped for a moment, brandishing her weapon, and then retired grumbling to her stronghold again. It is due to the reputation and the memory of Aunt Nauntje to state, that the dish was brought up with the rest of the supper, and pronounced by the colonel to be equal to any thing of the kind he had ever tasted in India; by which righteous decision he for ever established himself in the good graces of that high-seasoned and high-seasoning divinity. The supper went off gayly,

in spite of the discomfiture of uncle Ariel, who soon recovered his good-humour; for he was not one of those impracticable churls who quarrel with the good things of this life and retain their anger at the same time they are gratifying their appetites. He threw out broad hints concerning the colonel and Catalina, every now and then favouring that young lady with a significant wink, or, "a-hem!" — worried poor Sybrandt out of the little self-possession he had been able to get together, by recollecting every thing the youth wished to be forgotten; shouted, laughed, and finally talked himself fast asleep in the old high-backed, well-stuffed chair, which had been an heirloom, with its fellows, in the family for almost a century. The worthy Dominie Stettinius was heart-struck the next day, when he learned that the party had prolonged its sober revels until the clock actually struck the half-hour between eleven and the very witching time of midnight.

A little incident, apparently of no consequence, which occurred this evening, had a material, nay, a controlling, influence on the future life of Sybrandt Westbrook. As the party separated for the night, the gallant colonel besought Catalina to bestow on him a little bunch of violets she wore in her bosom. In the gayety of the moment, or perhaps influenced by that mischievous imp who is for ever found nestling in woman's heart, she bestowed the flowers on Sydenham, with a most gracious and seducing smile, wishing him at the same time "pleasant dreams." The gift, the smile, and the wish, were each one a dagger of ice planted in the bosom of Sybrandt, agonizing

his feelings and murdering his rest. The wakeful tortures of that livelong night gave birth to a fixed purpose, which he carried into execution without delay.



CHAPTER VIII.

OUR HERO, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS LIFE, COMES TO A DETERMINATION.

THE life of jealousy and mortification he had led almost ever since the return of Catalina from the boarding-school gradually undermined the natural strength of Sybrandt's intellect, and produced that alternation of pride, anger, and self-reproach, which is the parent of a thousand inconsistencies. No permanent resolve can ever result from such a condition of mind. Tossed about in the tempest of conflicting passions, the unhappy man resembles a vessel without rudder or pilot, until finally some one acquires the mastery, and a decision is indicated by a sudden air of quiet and repose.

It was thus with Sybrandt. The bestowal of the violets put an end to the struggle which he had sustained for some months past, and his resolution was irrevocably taken. In the days of which we are speaking, the young men bordering on the frontiers were accustomed, almost universally, to commence the business of this world with a trading voyage among the savages of the borders. Previous to assuming the port and character of manhood, it was considered an almost indispensable obligation to undertake and complete some enterprise of this kind, full of privation and danger. The youth went out a boy, and returned a man, qualified to take his place among men, and to aspire to the possession of the object of his early

love. It was in this way that the character of the patriarchs of this country was formed; and in consequence of such training that it exhibited a union of homely simplicity, manly frankness, and daring vigour, which at length found their reward in the achievement and possession of liberty.

Without consulting any human being, the morning after the supper we have just recorded, he abruptly requested of Mr. Dennis Vancour the permission and the means to make an adventure among the Indians of the north-west. Mr. Dennis was not astonished, for he was a genuine Dutchman; but he was much surprised at this application.

“Why, hang it, boy,” said the good man, “what is the use of it? You know you will have enough when I am gone — and while I live you can want nothing. You had better stay at home, and study with the Dominie.”

“But I cannot study now — I” — and here Sybrandt faltered and was silent.

“What, you are tired boy, hey? Well, I don’t much wonder at it. I always had a great respect for learning, but, somehow, I could never get over the awe with which it inspired me; I always kept at a distance from it. But are you determined? won’t you flinch, boy, when it comes to the point?”

“Never fear me, uncle,” — and he clenched his fingers involuntarily, — “never fear me!”

“Well, then, you shall have what you ask of me. I like your spirit, boy. It was so I began life, and so shall you. Forty years ago, I took a canoe and fifty dollars’ worth of goods, and old Tjerck, then but a lad; and away I went right into the woods, where at

that time, I believe, no white man had ever been before me, and returned alive. The Indians were not such good hands at making bargains as they are now, and I returned with five hundred dollars' worth of furs. I repeated the like every year, increasing my capital each voyage, until I grew rich, for the times. I might have been happy, too, perhaps," continued the old man, "but I must needs go to New York, where I fell in company with the king's officers, and, what was worse, fell in love with your mother — spent my fortune — ruined my hopes — was first fool and then misanthrope — returned to my father's house, a disappointed prodigal — inherited a portion of my father's estate, and finally found in the son an object for that love which the mother had rejected."

Mr. Dennis Vancour had never been equally communicative with Sybrandt. Perhaps the idea of parting with the boy of his adoption had opened his heart, and for a moment overcome his long habit of silence.

"But who shall go with you?" resumed the good man, after a pause, which each had employed in calling up recollections of the same dear object. "I have it — old Tjerck is the very man."

"I am afraid he is too old, sir."

"Not he — not he, boy — he is as tough as hickory — he'll tire you out, and starve you out, any time, I warrant you. Besides, he speaks the Mohawk language." So it was settled that old Tjerck should be the squire of our new knight-errant of the woods and wilds.

A few days sufficed to prepare for this toilsome and perilous voyage and journey. As many Indian

goods as could be conveniently stowed in a light bark canoe, a small quantity of provisions, two rifles, or perhaps muskets, with the necessary ammunition, and two stout hearts, constituted the outfit for this way-faring in the wilderness. My readers, if they belong to the "better sort," will think this but a peddling affair for the hero of a story; but let them recollect that it was a dangerous enterprise, and that courage and daring ennoble every honest undertaking.

From the moment Sybrandt formed the resolution and commenced the preparations aforesaid, he seemed to be a new man. He had something to do, and something to suffer, worthy of a man. He had action and excitement, to call his attention from his own selfish and petty vexations, and now he walked erect with spirit in his step, determination in his eye. In short, he presented an illustration of the intimate union between the man and his purposes. The one is fashioned by the other; and nothing is more certain than the enfeebling effect of eternal trifling. All this time he went not near Catalina; and it was only when thinking of her—which he did pretty often—that he relapsed into his old habitual inconsistencies, and felt himself, as it were, becalmed between two conflicting objects. He certainly had a great curiosity to know what she said or thought of his going away; wondered whether she would not regret his absence; and secretly tried to persuade himself that she would understand—(what he had taken all possible pains to keep from her)—his motives for acting as he did. He thought to himself, that if she would only pine away a little in his absence, he would forgive her on his return. At one time he decided to depart without

seeing her; at another, to take leave of her with the most sovereign coolness; and, finally, came to no decision at all. In this state he was found by Ariel, who was highly out of humour at having had nothing to do in the equipment of Sybrandt. It was the first pie that had been made in the neighbourhood for many a year, in which he had not had a finger.

“Devil take it,” quoth he, “why didn’t you ask my advice? Why, I would have shown you how to paddle your canoe — to cook venison without salt — sleep with your mouth shut, to keep out the gnats and mosquitoes — and shoot an Indian. But it’s too late now; I’ve a great mind to go with you on purpose, only I’ve promised the officers to show them how to ring pigs’ noses.” So saying, he dragged him away, half-willing, half-reluctant, to the mansion-house.

When Catalina heard of the contemplated adventure of our hero, she mused in silence on the subject for hours, without being able to make up her mind whether to be angry or sorry. She never dreamed that her own conduct had influenced his course, and therefore ascribed his omission to apprise her of what was going forward to neglect and indifference. Under this impression she determined to treat him accordingly, and to meet him, if he came at all, without any appearance of surprise or regret at his sudden resolution. She received him without expressing either, or betraying a single spark of curiosity or solicitude about the length of his stay or the course of his voyage. She even jested on the subject, begging him to exercise his scholarship in teaching the Indians Greek and Latin; and stung him to the very soul, by observing, with as pretty a sneer as ever enthroned itself on the

lip of beauty, that his sojourning among the savages could not fail of having "the most favourable influence on their manners."

The interview became exceedingly painful to Sybrandt. He would have given the world to be out of the room, yet was riveted to the spot by that mysterious fascination which awkwardness and sensibility exercise over the power of motion. He sat chained to his chair by mortified pride and despised affection. At last, however, with a desperate effort, he arose and muttered his farewell. At that moment Catalina remembered that she owed her life to him, and that he was going to a region whence he might never return.

"Sybrandt," said she, in a voice which these recollections had softened into kindness, "what shall I give you to remember me by in the woods?" After a moment's pause, she drew from her pocket,—we beg our fashionable readers to bear in mind that this was almost a hundred years ago,—she drew from her pocket a golden coin—we believe it was a Dutch ducat—and continued, with a tone and look of saddened vivacity, "Take this: you can make a hole in it, and tie it round your neck as a talisman against Indian witchcraft. Good-by, cousin Sybrandt, and remember—that—that Dominie Stettinius will regret your absence." Sybrandt took the piece of gold, but he could not say, "Good-by," for the soul of him. He thanked her, however, with a look so full of meaning and tenderness, that she remembered and wondered at it a long time afterward. Sybrandt made a hole in the ducat, and, tying it with a riband, wore it from that moment next his heart.

CHAPTER IX.

THE WILDERNESS.

EARLY next morning, ere the tints of the bright morning reddened the eastern sky or the birds had left their perches among the clustering foliage, all things being ready, Sybrandt launched his light canoe on the smooth mirror of the Hudson, and, assisted by the dusky Charon, old Tjerck, paddled away upward, towards the sources of that majestic river. The first day, they occasionally saw, along its low, luxuriant borders, some scattered indications of the footsteps of the white man, and heard, amid the high, towering forests at a distance in the uplands, the axe of the first settler, the crash of the falling tree, the barking of the deep-mouthed hound, and the report of a solitary, distant gun, repeated over and over by the echoes, never perhaps awakened thus before. A rude hut, the first essay towards improvement upon the Indian wigwam, appeared here and there at long intervals along the shores, the image of desertion and desolation, but teeming with life. As they passed along, the little, half-clothed, white-haired urchins poured forth, gazing and shouting at the passing strangers. Gradually these evidences of the progress of that roving, adventurous race, which is sending forth its travellers, its merchants, its scholars, its warriors, and its missionaries, armed with the sword and the Bible, into every region of the peopled earth,

ceased altogether. Nature displayed herself naked before them, and the innocent earth exhibited her beauties in all the careless, unstudied simplicity of our first parents, ere the sense of guilt taught them to blush and be ashamed. There was silence on the earth, on the waters, and in the air, save when the Creator's voice spoke in the whirlwind, the thunder, and the raging of the river when the full-charged clouds poured their deluge into its placid bosom.

Night, which in the crowded haunts of men is the season of silence and repose, was here far more noisy than the day. It was then that the prowling freebooters of the woods issued from their recesses to seek their prey and hymn their shrill or growling vespers to the changeful moon or the everlasting stars, those silent witnesses of what mortals wish to hide. As they toiled upward in the moonlight evenings against the current, which every day became more rapid in approaching towards the falls, they were hailed from the shore at intervals by the howl of the wolves, the growling of the bears, and the cold, cheerless quaverings of the solitary screech-owl. When, tired with the labours of the day, they drew their canoe to the shore and lay by for the night, their only safety was in lighting a fire and keeping it burning all the time. This simple expedient furnishes the sole security against the ferocious hunger of these midnight marauders, who stay their approach at a certain distance, where they stand and utter their cry, and glare with their eyes, a mark for the woodsman, who takes his aim directly between these two balls of living fire.

But the labours of our hero's voyage were far greater than the dangers. He and his trusty squire

had to breast the swift waters from morning until night, and win every foot of their way by skill and exertion combined. Sometimes the current swept through a long, narrow reach, between ledges of rocks that crowded it into increasing depth and velocity, — at others it wound its devious way by sudden, abrupt turnings, bristling on every side with sharp projections either just above or just below the surface; and at others they were obliged to unload their little bark, and carry its freight round some impassable obstruction. In this manner they proceeded, with an attention, an anxiety, never to be relaxed for a moment without the danger, nay, the certainty, of the shipwreck of their frail canoe, the loss of their cargo, and the disgrace of an unsuccessful voyage. This last was what every young man feared beyond all the toils and perils of his enterprise. It was a death-blow to his reputation, as well as to his future prospects; for not a rural damsel would condescend to waste a smile upon a youthful admirer who had failed in his first adventure. The two qualities most valued among these good people were courage and prudence; and it argued a want of both of these, when one lost his boat and his wares, or stopped short of a profitable market among the men of the woods.

At length, after enduring what would demolish a regiment of well-dressed dandies in these degenerate times, on the fourth day, towards evening, they were warned, by a distant, dull, monotonous, heavy sound, of their approach to the falls of Fort Edward, as they were then called — at that time a frontier post.

“Hark! massa Sybrandt,” said Tjerck, as he paused from plying his paddle: “hark! I hear him.”

"Hear what?" replied the other.

"The falls, massa. Maybe we find some Indians dare to trade wid."

Sybrandt listened, and could plainly distinguish the leaden plunge of the river, gradually becoming more noticeable as they worked their way up the stream, which now began to eddy about in little whirlpools, each with its handful of snow-white foam. Turning a projecting point, they met the full force of the current; which, in spite of all their efforts, jerked the bow of the light canoe completely round, and shot her, like an arrow from a bow, out into the middle of the river. Finding it impossible to proceed any farther in this way, they landed, and commenced the laborious task of unlading and carrying their merchandise and canoe round the falls to meet the placid current above. While thus occupied, they encountered a party of Mohawks, who had come thither to fish, headed by a chief called Paskingoe, or the one-eyed. He was an athletic savage, six feet high, of a ferocious appearance and an indifferent character. He had lost an eye in some drunken brawl; and, having mixed a good deal with the white men, exhibited the usual effects of such an intercourse, in a combination of the vices of both races. Cunning, avaricious, and revengeful, he still had sufficient mastery over his feelings to disguise them when occasion required; unless indeed he was under the horrid dominion of drink. Then his bad passions became ungovernable, and his rage without discrimination or control. It was said he had killed his own son in one of these paroxysms, under pretence that he was undermining his influence with the tribe. He was sitting, with his party of four Indians, under

the shade of a clump of pines that nodded over the foaming torrent, when Sybrandt and Tjerck, suddenly, and unexpectedly to themselves, came full upon them. The Indians had seen them coming up the river afar off, with a keenness of vision which they possess perhaps beyond even the animals of the forest.

"Welcome, brother," said the chief to Sybrandt.

"Ah! Paskingoe, how you do?" said Tjerck, who had known him before. "I no tink to see you here. — And I no glad, nudder," added he to himself.

There was little ceremony practised in these interviews between the traders and the Indians. Sybrandt inquired for furs, and the chief asked what he had to exchange for them. Finding that he had brought with him two or three kegs of that poison which has swept away the race of the red men, and seems almost on the eve of doing the same by the whites, Paskingoe became very earnest with him to go to the junction of the Hudson with the Sacandaga, representing that he had plenty of people there who would barter commodities.

Tjerck shook his head, and Sybrandt paused.

"What, is my brother afraid?" said Paskingoe. "Is not the Mohawk the friend of the white man? Men that are afraid should stay at home with their wives," added he contemptuously.

"I am not afraid; but" —

"Huh!" said Paskingoe; "when I go to the fort, I will tell them I met a white man who dared not go to the Sacandaga, because he heard an old owl screech;" — alluding to the shrugs and motions of Tjerck. "My brother will get no beavers, unless he ventures further. He will go home as he came, and the young women will laugh at him."

Sybrandt thought of Catalina, and determined to accompany the chief. The Indians assisted him at the portages of Fort Edward and Glen's Falls; and, though they cast many a longing look at the kegs of rum, throwing out sundry shrewd hints at the same time, they took none of it, either by theft or by violence. At length, after a toilsome stretch, they reached the junction of the two rivers, where neither was a hundred yards wide. The mighty Hudson was here an unimportant stream, giving no promise of his majestic after-course, or of the riches he was destined to bear in future times upon his broad bosom. Near the place of their union there were extensive tracts of low and wild meadows without trees, coursed by the meandering branches of the Sacandaga, which at that time abounded with the finest trout. It was a solitary region, entirely out of the usual route of travelers, who either followed the course of the Mohawk river, or left the Hudson at Fort Edward, and struck across the high hills to the end of Lake George on their way to Canada. The nearest settlement was at Johnstown, to the South, where Sir William Johnson resided, and whence he exercised that sway over the tribes of Indians far and near, which still remains, and will remain for ever, a subject of admiration and wonder.

There were neither Indians nor beaver skins at the station, as promised by Paskingoe, who, by closely examining the grass, ascertained, as he said, that the party had gone away a day or two before, towards the fishing-house. This was a small lodge built on a little rocky elevation, just on the edge of the meadows and at the head of one of the branches of the Sacan-

daga, by Sir William Johnson, who sometimes came there from Johnstown, to hunt and fish. Paskingoe assured Sybrandt he would find them not far from the lodge, in which, (being unoccupied for a great part of the time), the Indians occasionally slept, when the weather was bad. If any idea of danger crossed the mind of Sybrandt, it was coupled with the conviction that, if Paskingoe had any bad designs, they could be executed just as well where he was as at the place where the chief wished him to go. He therefore consented to proceed, notwithstanding all the eloquence of old Tjerck, who, by signs and looks, attempted to dissuade him. Accordingly, early the next morning, they embarked on the sluggish Sacandaga, the Indians in their canoe, and Sybrandt with his trusty squire in his, and paddled their way along the devious windings of the lazy, lonely stream, that seemed an enormous serpent asleep in the high grass that skirted its banks. After proceeding some miles they became, as it were, lost in the pathless monotony of the vast meadows, which presented in the hazy obscurity of an overcast day no distinct outline or boundary. The silence all around them was as the silence of a winter's night, when the wind is hushed to a freezing calm, save that the dipping of the paddles, at measured intervals, was heard, and scarcely heard, like the clicking of the death-watch when all else is still. Sometimes, though but seldom, a solitary heron would raise his long neck above the coarse growth by the water, and make a strange discordant noise, which was echoed by the Indians in mockery: but otherwise it was a dead pause of nature; the world of sound was still, and the world of sight presented nothing

but a landscape of drear melancholy sameness, a sky of one dim unvarying shade of motionless clouds.

Sybrandt felt his dismal situation, which became gradually more disagreeable from his seeing, or imagining he saw, certain looks of equivocal meaning pass between Paskingoe and his Indians. Once, turning suddenly round, he observed the one-eyed chief shake his head in answer to an inquiring look of one of his companions, and point in the direction where, peering above the dead level of the lowland, stood the rustic fishing-house. Towards evening they approached the head of navigation on the stream, close by which stood the building. For some time before, the dull flashes of the lightning, sluggishly followed at intervals by the distant thunders, grumbling and muttering, had indicated the advance of a storm. Gradually the Indians plied their paddles more and more rapidly, and so did Sybrandt and the negro, in order to keep pace with them. At length, just as they arrived at a rude landing-place, where Sir William Johnson launched his canoe when going on a fishing-match, the waving of the pine woods, which here bordered in majestic gloom and grandeur on the margin of the wide meadow, and the pattering drops of rain, announced that the crisis was approaching rapidly. There was only time for Sybrandt to cover his merchandise carefully, ere it came in torrents, on the wings of a wind that laid flat the rank high grass, and made the forest groan. The entire party, Sybrandt, Tjerck, and the Indians, hurried to the fishing-house, the door of which was opened without ceremony, there being no one in it, and no furniture requiring a guard.

CHAPTER X.

A NIGHT-SCENE.

FOR some time there was a dead silence among the group. Paskingoe was moody, and Sybrandt, seeing no traces of the Indians he expected to meet at this spot, from time to time eyed him with looks of suspicion. He could not help believing his designs were at least questionable, nor disguise from himself that he was entirely at the mercy of the Indians.

"My brother thinks I have two tongues and two faces," said the one-eyed chief at last, in a sarcastic tone.

Sybrandt made no answer.

"The white man," continued Paskingoe, raising his voice, "does not know what to say; he is afraid to speak out. If I tell him the Indians and the beavers will come to-morrow, he will not believe me. Why should I lie to him? Is he not a musk-rat caught in a trap?"

Sybrandt felt it was true; he was completely in the power of the Indian. Hardly knowing what to say, he continued silent. The evening was now setting in, and the storm continued. The wind roared among the pines, the lightning flashed almost incessantly through the windows, accompanied by loud, angry peals of thunder: and now and then the crash of a falling tree gave token of a triumph of the angry elements. The uproar without was strongly contrasted

with the stillness within. Paskingoe sat in grim silence, smoking his pipe; Sybrandt was occupied in no very pleasing reflections on his awkward situation; and old Tjerck, from long experience of the Indian character, saw that mischief was at work in the breast of the chief.

"Is not the white man, and the black-white man, hungry?" at length he said. "Has he any thing good in his canoe? Let him send for it, and we will eat together."

Sybrandt had no disinclination to this proposal, and Tjerck was despatched, with one of the Indians, to bring in some provisions from the canoe. While they were gone, the one-eye ordered his people to kindle a fire, which they did with some difficulty, and the room at length became illuminated with the red glare of the pine knots that hissed in the chimney. In a little while Tjerck and the Indian returned, bringing the provisions which our voyagers had laid in, together with two guns which had been left in the canoe. The eye of Paskingoe flashed.

"Is the white man afraid of the bears and wolves, to-night?"

"I brought 'em for fear he get wet," said old Tjerck. As the one-eye turned his blind side towards them, Tjerck dexterously handed Sybrandt a knife which he had concealed under his homespun linen frock, and the young man as dexterously hid it in his bosom. The meal being now prepared, they sat down to partake of it. After finishing, the one-eye asked Sybrandt—

"Has the white man any fire-water in his canoe?"

"I have," replied Sybrandt.

After a pause of some minutes, the chief asked —

“Is it good?”

“It is.”

Another pause ensued, which was again interrupted by the chief.

“Has it never been to the spring? Our people have been poisoned by the white man mixing too much cold water with the fire-water.”

“It is very good,” answered Sybrandt: and another pause ensued.

“When the white man comes among us,” said the chief, “we offer the best we have. We don’t hide away our corn, and give him the husk. That is what you white men call nigger.”

“No more nigger dan yourself!” muttered old Tjerck.

“Some drink would be very good,” said One-eye. “I am dry.”

Tjerck politely handed him a horn-cup of water, which he dashed on the floor, while his countenance began to exhibit keen anger and impatience.

“If the white man won’t give, will he sell? The Great Manitou has promised me some fire-water to-night. I dreamed so last night.”

“You dream almost equal to Sir William Johnson,” replied Sybrandt, smiling. Paskingoe shook his head.

“No, no,” said he, “Sir William out-dreams me. He dreamed away my best hunting-grounds; but I only dreamed away his red coat. But, will the white man trade for some fire-water?”

Sybrandt felt the peculiar delicacy of his situation, thus buried in the wild solitudes of the Sacandaga. He

knew the danger of declining, as well as of complying with the wishes of Paskingoe. To refuse entirely would be to provoke his violence; to give him a moderate portion of spirits would, probably, but render him more eager for more; and to afford the means of intoxication would be only the prelude to violence and murder. While he was considering, the displeasure of the whole party became so evident, that he at length determined, as the best course, to gratify them with a small quantity, in the remote hope that they would be satisfied. He accordingly sent Tjerck for a bottle which he had laid aside to treat the old man from, now and then. Tjerck shook his head, and obeyed with manifest unwillingness.

"It is good," said One-eye, as he took a deep draught, and handed it to the savage next him. "It is good, but the water is very shallow; the Indian sees the bottom too easily." And indeed, by the time it had gone round the bottle was empty. Sufficient had, however, been swallowed to waken the sleeping demon that liquor invariably conjures up in the heart of an Indian. As it mounted into their brains they became clamorous for more, and Sybrandt saw that his life would fall a sacrifice to refusing any longer. Accordingly, a small keg was brought from the canoe, and the Indians set in for a complete savage debauch. In a little time their howlings and shoutings almost overpowered the uproar of the elements, and their uncontrolled and uncontrollable animal spirits found vent in grimaces, boastings, and antics of mingled ferocity and buffoonery. Their eyeballs glared, they danced, and sung, and flourished their tomahawks and scalping-knives over the head of Sybrandt, who

stood in a corner, his right hand in his bosom grasping his knife, in momentary expectation that that deep and never-dying hatred which the Indian cherishes for the white man would precipitate them into some act of violence against him. He kept his eye steadily and fearlessly upon Paskingoe, who was now half-mad, enumerating, with violent gesticulations, and tones of crack-brained, barbarous exultation, the white men he had slain, whose wives and children he had scalped, whose homes he had burned. He told how he had gone, alone, to a town of the Hurons, which he entered at midnight, and murdered every soul in one of the wigwams, after which he retired, without leaving any traces, into the woods, and secreted himself. The next night he came again, and murdered the people of another wigwam, retiring, as before, into the woods without being seen. The third night he was watched, and pursued before he could achieve his last piece of butchery. But he related, amid the triumphant yells of his companions, how he escaped from his enemies, and brought home with him twenty-seven of their scalps.

“What white man could do this?” cried he, darting a malignant glance upon Sybrandt; “What white man would dare do this, even if his limbs were not like those of a woman? The white man is a coward and a liar; he cheats us of our lands, and builds forts upon them, from behind which he shoots us down like dogs. He thinks he is our master, and that we are his black niggers, who have nothing we can call our own.” Then, brandishing his tomahawk, and dancing, and whirling himself round, yelling at the same time in concert with his companions, he went on:—“The white man cannot stand before the In-

dian, unless two to one. I know it — I, Paskingoe — I know it. At Cataraqui I buried this tomahawk in the skulls of two of the cowards who were running away like deer. At Hochelaga I drank the blood of three bragging deer; it was pale and cold, like that of a fish. At the great water of Ontario I tore out their hearts, and every where I go, I drag their scalps, dripping, from their skulls. They could never look me in the face, and so the cowards tried to escape the fire of my eyes by putting them out. But they shall know me better with one eye than they did with two. Ten scalps have paid for one of my eyes, and ten more shall be paid before I sleep with my fathers.”

Gradually, excited by the liquor and the stories of these bloody exploits, the Indians and their chief became raving mad. They quarrelled and struck at each other with their knives, and thirsted for blood with the instinct of beasts of prey maddened by lust or hunger. At length One-eye shouted —

“Are we fools? Blood must be shed to-night, but not the blood of the Indian. The Great Spirit has sent the white man here to atone for the wrongs of his people. Let him die!”

“Let us drink his blood!” — “Let us tear out his heart!” echoed the rest, as they brandished their weapons and came furiously towards Sybrandt. At this moment the soul of the young man bowed to the supremacy of these accumulating horrors; but it sunk only for a moment, and then regained its level. There was no chance of retreat, and the very hopelessness of escape nerved him to a resolute exertion of his means of defence. He grasped his secret knife, and looked round for his trusty Tjerck, whose dusky form

he saw at the moment vanishing out of one of the windows on the opposite side of the room. Thus left alone, he braced himself for what might follow. The Indians, with all their hardihood and daring, are chary of their lives; although, when it comes to the inevitable, no people of the earth die so coolly. But the point of honour is to achieve their object with as little loss as possible. They therefore advanced warily upon Sybrandt, who stood as warily on the defence. They approached—their hands were raised to strike, and he was just about to spring upon the one-eyed chief, when a loud, long war-whoop was heard, apparently close under the window, quavering amid the pauses of the storm.

“Hush! ’tis the war-cry of the Adirondacks,” said Paskingoe.

The Indians suspended their purpose, and listened with breathless anxiety. Nothing was heard but the falling rain, the roaring of the forest, and the rattling thunder.

“The Adirondacks dare not come here; they are women,” declared One-eye, contemptuously. They resumed their bloody intent, and again the shrill war-whoop sounded amid the din without, and checked them for a moment. Sybrandt thought of retreating; but the single door was barred by the Indians, who stood for a few minutes expecting an attack from without.

“Let us die like warriors,” said Paskingoe, and took another drink. His example was followed by the others, and the renewed draught added fury to their passions.

“The white man is a traitor,” they cried. “He has

brought the Adirondacks upon us ;” and then One-eye aimed a blow with his tomahawk, that Sybrandt could not parry. He warded it from his head, but it fell on his left arm, and disabled it entirely. In dealing this blow, however, Paskingoe, being somewhat unsteady with the liquor he had drunk, stumbled forward heavily, and fell upon the knife of Sybrandt, which entered his heart. He fell upon the floor, and the rage of his party became still more intense. They yelled, horribly ; and, notwithstanding the cool determination of our hero, a few moments must have decided his fate, when, just at the instant that death hovered over him—at the very crisis when their tomahawks and knives were about to let out his life-blood—the door of the fishing-house was violently burst open, and a tall, majestic white man in a hunting dress rushed into the room, followed by half a dozen people. The arms of the Indians, the moment they saw him, were arrested, and their weapons remained lifted above their heads.

CHAPTER XI.

A WOODSMAN.

THE stranger addressed a few words in the Mohawk language to the statue-like warriors, with an air of indescribable authority. They lowered their weapons, and retired to the other extremity of the room, to which he had waved them with his hand. He then advanced towards Sybrandt, now become weak with the loss of blood, and courteously asked an explanation of the scene, which the young man briefly gave. The stranger shook his head, and exclaimed, in a desponding tone,

“Rum — rum — rum! the shame of the white man; the ruin of the red. What can I do with these wretched people, when my own do all they can to undo what I have devoted my life to accomplish!”

Then, observing that Sybrandt leaned wearily against the wall, he asked, anxiously,

“Are you hurt, sir?”

“I believe I am, sir. I feel no pain, but my left arm seems useless;” and, overcome by weakness, he sunk upon the dead body of Paskingoe.

“Who is that?” asked the stranger, pointing to the corpse.

“Paskingoe,” muttered one of his party; — “the chief who gave you his lands, and whom you called brother. Revenge him.”

The stranger made no answer, but proceeded to

examine into the situation of Sybrandt, who had fainted, from loss of blood. He gave a key to one of his attendants, who descended into the cellar, in the wall of which was a secret recess where were kept a variety of the articles most useful amid the privations and accidents incident to travelling or sojourning far from the haunts of men and the conveniences of civilized life. The stranger applied what was proper of these to the case of Sybrandt, who in a short time recovered from his swoon and was accommodated with a sort of mattress from the receptacle above mentioned. Having seen to all this, the stranger turned to the Indians of Paskingoe's party, who were standing in sullen silence, and demanded the occasion of this fray.

"The white man can tell you. He will make a good story out of it. Ask him," said one of them.

"Very well," replied the stranger: "Take the body of your chief away to his people, that they may bury him. The storm is over. Go; and when you have done this, come to me. I will see justice done. Go, now, and take care what you do. Take care!"

The Mohawks raised the body of their chief, and departed with mournful steps, chanting the monotonous death-song, which gradually died away in the distance till it was heard no more. The stranger then, having ascertained that Sybrandt was in a deep, exhausted sleep, directed all to be kept quiet, and, carelessly throwing himself upon the floor, with his cheek supported on his hand, soon fell into a quiet repose, which was shared by all his companions, with the exception of one, who was directed to watch the slumbers of Sybrandt.

The morning dawned bright, clear, and refreshing, finding all safe and well but our hero, whose ailment, however, was nothing but weakness. He would have risen with the rest, but his head grew dizzy, and he obeyed the injunctions of the stranger, to remain quiet for that day at least.

"We will pursue the amusement of hunting, the object which in fact brought us here so opportunely, and it will go hard but you shall have some venison for dinner. I would promise you trout, too, but the streams are too much swelled for fishing. Remain quiet with your old servant, whom I have instructed what to do, and to-morrow my people shall carry you to my home on a litter of green boughs, which is better than all the sedan-chairs." So saying, he shook hands with Sybrandt, and departed, observing, "You have no fever, I see."

When they were left alone, Tjerck expressed an honest, heartfelt pleasure at the miraculous escape of his young master. "I did all I could for young massa," said he.

"Yes, you ran away," said Sybrandt, who felt not a little indignant at his desertion.

"Aha! massa," said Tjerck, "who you tink make dat great war-whoop dat stop de rascal One-eye, two, tree minute, and save your life, hey?"

"I don't know; the Adirondacks, I suppose."

"Old nigger!" cried Tjerck, with immeasurable self-complacency, and laughing with all his might; "old nigger make it."

Sybrandt took in the whole plan, and thanked Tjerck for the prompt diversion made in his favour, which, by giving time for the coming of the stranger,

undoubtedly saved his life. He then gradually died away into the slumber of weakness, while his black guardian angel sat and watched him with the stillness of a dead calm in the wilderness.

His repose was long and deep, and he awoke refreshed and hungry. The stranger and his party returned from their hunt, with plenty of game, and Sybrandt was allowed to partake sparingly of the meal which was prepared. He now had leisure to contemplate the person to whom he owed his rescue from the drunken ferocity of One-eye and his gang. He was, to all appearance, about forty years of age, with a form of the largest and most lofty proportions, a deep ruddy, yet bronzed complexion, and a countenance of a singular combination of attributes. It united those indescribable yet indelible traits which seem inseparable from a cultivated intellect, with the careless, fearless daring of one whose life had been passed in the midst of dangers and in the enjoyment of unlimited sway. His deportment, while it was easy and courteous to all, betrayed a careless superiority, which both the Indians and white men seemed tacitly to acknowledge, obeying implicitly every word he uttered, every motion of his hand, and every glance of his eye. His manner and mode of expressing himself sufficiently indicated that he had sat at good men's feasts and been where bells had tolled to church, at the same time that they were totally distinct from those of the gentlemen Sybrandt had seen at the house of his uncle. His motions exhibited the ease, facility, and unembarrassed vigour of an Indian, and there was a peculiar force, brevity, and richness in his phraseology that smacked of the Indian manner of

expression. He wore a hunting dress equally partaking in the modes of savage and civilized man, and, indeed, altogether, exhibited a strange confusion of the characteristics of the two races. His deportment towards Sybrandt was kind, at the same time that his attentions were rather indifferent than very particular. He took upon himself the direction of our hero, his merchandise, and his affairs, without consulting, or seeming to think it worth while to consult, him.

"To-morrow, at sunrise," said he, "we shall set out for home. My people will carry you and your baggage. The canoe must be left where it is." Then, turning to his people, "Rest, and be ready by break of day."

In a few minutes all was quiet, though, with the exception of Sybrandt, the floor was their bed, and their pillow a knapsack, a log, or perchance a stone. In the dawn of the morning they set forth in a direction nearly South-West, through an evergreen forest, gigantic and grave, such as nature produces but once on the same soil, by the exertion of her unimpaired youthful energies. The solemn pines, straight as an arrow, and without a single limb below a height of a hundred feet, seeming already shaped for the masts of some mighty man-of-war, stood side by side, at distances which left sufficient space unencumbered by underwood for the travellers to pass without difficulty. But when, as it sometimes happened, their course lay through a rich, juicy bottom-land, a new creation sprung up before them, of beeches, maples, and majestic sycamores, spreading and interlocking their arms, and forming an impenetrable shade, only to be visited by the bright rays of the winter sun

when the leaves fall and the branches are bare. In the damp and gloom of their shelter flourished a lesser race of nature's progeny, consisting of shrubs, and vines, and plants of every various name, mingling and matting together, and forming a succession of obstacles which only the strength, skill, and perseverance of a woodsman might overcome.

The litter of boughs in which Sybrandt was placed was carried in turn by the followers of the stranger, and certainly a more easy mode of conveyance was never devised for an invalid. Rude, and silent, and monotonous as was the forest through which their journey lay, it was not devoid of gayety or incident. Sometimes the keen eye of one of the party would detect a black squirrel, looking down from the topmost branches of one of these towering pines, and barking, as it were in derision. The leader would then propose some trifling prize for bringing it down with a single bullet, and without drawing blood. A halt would forthwith be made, for the competition. None but a woodsman could even distinguish these little animals among the dark foliage of the lofty pines, clinging close to the limb, and almost incorporating themselves with their asylum. Each took his turn, and the object was to put a ball on the bark of the tree directly where it came in contact with the body of the squirrel, by which he would be stunned, and fall to the ground without any external wound. Few were capable of this feat on the first essay, and loud were the shouts that echoed through the forest at the abortive attempts. When each one had tried without success, the leader would utter some epithet of contempt, bid them stand aside, and never fail to bring

the creature down without breaking his skin. So, if they met with any difficulties in their march which the strength, skill, or intrepidity of the others could not surmount, he took the lead and labouring oar, and conquered every obstacle of nature by superior force, management, or daring. It was by frequent instances of this sort that the mystery of his unbounded sway over his people was explained to Sybrandt. The human character can only be consummated and perfected by the union of knowledge and strength, directed and animated by a courage that dares all dangers, defies all obstacles.

At mid-day they halted in an open space for the purpose of rest and refreshment. "On this spot," said the stranger, carelessly,—"on this spot, about fifteen years ago, was fought a bloody battle between the Hurons and the Mohawks. We were taken by surprise, and suffered dreadfully; but—" and his eye kindled in triumph,—"we, I and my Indians, made the cowards flee at last, and shot them down like deer. The name and the nation was extinguished on this spot at a single blow. History says nothing of this; but, if a bedrid king or superannuated queen had died that day, it would have been carefully recorded. The causes which change the destinies of men and the face of the earth lie unseen and unnoticed, while little things and little men are carefully handed down to future times, as mighty agents in the vast business of the universe. Such is history, and, in fact, tradition is no better. One conceals or overlooks the truth; the other tattles falsehoods." And he mused for a short while, as if applying these observations to his own experience.

CHAPTER XII.

THE WOODSMAN'S HOME.

ON the evening of the second day, they arrived at the residence of the stranger, a few miles from the banks of the Mohawk river. It was an embryo settlement, composed of log-cabins, the first remove from the bark-huts of the Indians. "This is the capital of my kingdom," said the stranger; "it is a wide domain, not very populous; but, never mind, the time will come." He welcomed Sybrandt to his house, (which was a large square edifice of hewn pines, having the interstices filled with mortar), with that frank, careless hospitality characteristic of every thing he said or did, and presented him to his wife and children—the former an Indian woman, the latter an evident mixture of wild and tame, and the perfect patterns of Nature in their symmetry.

Sybrandt remained at the house of the stranger some weeks, ere he entirely recovered from the effects of his wound; and, after his recovery, in truth, he was in no haste to go away. It was evident, too, that the stranger did not wish to part with him. "It is long," said he, "since I have had a companion who could talk with me on subjects connected with my early habits and associations."

Our hero could not refrain from expressing his surprise at seeing a person of his education and accomplishments thus voluntarily become an exile from

civilized society, to mix with beings so different from himself.

“Why, I don’t know,” replied he, smiling; “I was tired of the labour of doing nothing. In my own country I was a gentleman, but a gentleman without fortune; and such a one, you know, cannot stoop to be active and useful, except in certain professions. I was physically incapacitated for any sedentary employment, for there is about me an impatience of being still, a sort of instinctive longing for exercise, fresh air, and freedom of action, that makes me a fitter companion for wild beasts and wild men than for lords and ladies. They might have made a soldier of me; but my family was Jacobite, and neither would we ask, nor the government grant me, a commission. I might have gone into a foreign service; but, the truth is, I had some qualms about one day or other perhaps being obliged, either to fight against my own country, or desert the standard under which I had voluntarily enlisted. It happened that an intimate friend of mine was appointed governor of this province, and the thought struck me that I should have plenty of elbow-room in the new world, and plenty of exercise for my ungovernable propensity to activity, in hunting deer, wrestling with bears, skirmishing with the Indians, and other rural amusements. I proposed to accompany him, and he accepted me as a companion, under the character of his private secretary. On landing in New York, he desired me to sit down and write to the colonial secretary an account of our voyage and safe arrival. Before I had got half through there was an alarm in the house that a bear had made his appearance in one of the markets, or, perhaps, as I be-

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lieve was the fact, in the only market in the city, which I suppose has grown very much since. I threw down my pen, sallied forth in the crowd, and, after a smart skirmish with Sir Bruin, actually killed him with my own hand.

"I was excessively proud of this exploit. 'I suppose you expect to be knighted,' said his Excellency, smiling. Then, shaking his head, he added, 'I see you won't do, my good friend. You are cut out for a mighty hunter before the Lord, like honest Nimrod, and not for a secretary. Have you an inclination to go as resident-minister among the Mohawks, and become the bear-leader, or, in more classic phrase, the Lycurgus of these wild Spartan warriors?'

"He then explained to me, that the government had directed him to establish, if possible, an agency somewhere on the banks of the Mohawk, for the purpose of acquiring an influence over these warlike tribes, for whose good graces the governors of Canada and New York had been for a long while contending.

"'What say you, my friend?' said he: 'I think you are the very man. You are about half Indian, already; and if you can only make them half white men, you cannot but agree admirably.'

"The idea caught my fancy, wonderfully; and I accepted the offer without hesitation. You, who have lived so near the confines of the dominion of Nature, and mixed with her sons, need not be told the particulars of my coming here, the privations and dangers I encountered, and the obstacles I met and overcame. We shall talk over these, some other day. I have already sat still here longer, I believe, than I have done at one time these ten years. So come, Westbrook,

'tis a fine day for a hunt; and you are well enough to join in it."

He then whistled his dogs, who came, wagging their tails, as much delighted as their master — furnished Sybrandt with a gun, and his eldest son, a boy about ten years old, with another, and, after making all necessary preparations, called his wife, an agreeable-looking Indian woman, with a voice as soft as a flute, and an eye like that of an antelope.

"Sakia! — (She is an Algonquin," said he to Sybrandt, "and her name translated into English is 'love.') — Sakia, we shall return before night. See that you have something good ready for us." Sakia went her way, smiling and good-humoured as a child.

"She is my wife — my good and lawful wife — and the mother of my children. I never had any other, and I never wish to have. You look as if you wanted to express your wonder that I have not brought a civilized European lady to share my solitude. But, in truth, what would such a one have done here but fret away her soul, and pine herself to death, and hang, a dead weight, upon me and my purposes. Not one in a million of the fine ladies I formerly associated with would have consented to accompany me in the wilderness; and if one had, in all human probability she would have made herself as wretched as she would have made me. She could not join me in hunting; and her lonely hours would have been imbittered by perpetual ennui or perpetual fears. Still less would an ignorant, vulgar white woman have suited me as a companion. The ignorance of the Indian is neither troublesome nor offensive, like that of civilized life; nor is it accompanied by the grossness of man-

ner and clumsy carriage characteristic of hard labour. An Indian woman is always graceful; and the sweetness of her voice makes amends for all that is wanting in sentiment and expression—or, rather, it is both sentiment and expression combined. No, no, young man—if you ever come to live in the woods, marry a wood-nymph. You might as well bring a dancing-master here as a fine lady. But come; we are wasting time. Take care you don't mistake me for a wild animal, when we get into the woods, and shoot me.—Here, Will, do you go ahead, my boy; and, if old Snacks don't behave herself, take a whip to her.—I give my boys the lead," said he, addressing Sybrandt, "whenever it can be done with safety. It makes them brave and manly."

Our party soon plunged into the pathless woods, and kept on till they struck the banks of a little lake, whose waters were of crystal, and in whose bosom the surrounding verdant banks were reflected with a thousand new and nameless beauties, just as the imagination heightens and adorns the realities of nature.

"Let us sit down here, awhile," said the stranger. "You seem tired. Or, if you like, you can stay here and fish, while Will and I skirt round the pond with our guns. I have brought fishing-tackle with me."

Sybrandt chose this alternative, being somewhat fatigued; and the stranger and his boy departed with the dogs, to make the tour of the lake, which seemed some half a dozen miles in circumference. "Lay your gun where you can reach it, in case a deer or a bear comes by," hallooed he from a distance, just as they vanished in the forest.

Influenced by the scene before him, which shed a

charming quiet and repose over his whole soul, Sybrandt, instead of engaging in the sport of fishing, continued to contemplate the unadorned, unsullied beauties of nature in this, her wild, secluded paradise. The limpid waters lay sleeping within their curtained banks, and not a sound, an echo, or a motion disturbed the death-like quiet of the landscape. The world, as it presented itself at that moment to his eye, was composed of the sky above, the lakelet and its green border beneath; all beyond was shut out from his view. The axe had never opened a vein in the primeval forest, that giant progeny which exhibited the product of the first energies of mother earth; nor had her bosom ever, in this lonely region, been seared by the hand of man. Life itself seemed extinct, except in the beating of Sybrandt's heart, and in the myriads of little fish, that sported in the transparent water, and turned their silvery sides ever and anon to the bright beams of the god of day. Sybrandt little dreamed, at that moment, that scarcely a single generation would pass away, before this region of the dead, or rather of those who never had an existence, would spring, as if by magic, into life and animation; that its silence would pass away before the babbling tongues of all ages, and almost all countries; that languages and men that never met before in any spot of all the earth would congregate within these now melancholy woods; and that the Promethean touch of courage, enterprise, activity, energy, and perseverance, would here perform, in almost less than no time, the far-famed ancient miracle of animating the lifeless clod into motion and intelligence.

So thought not Sybrandt. That selfish loneliness

which was the bane of his character here came over him with renewed force. He thought of the past and of the future, but only as they concerned himself and his own affairs, recollections, anticipations, hopes, fears, sufferings, and enjoyments. With these Catalina was so intimately associated, that he never thought of himself without thinking of her. The scene and the silence developed a more than ordinary depression and sadness; for solitude is ever the nurse of melancholy musings, imaginary woes, and foreboding apprehensions. In connexion with Catalina, he recollected little from which he could derive any gratification, or on which memory could exercise its powers of exaggeration to any other purpose than to increase and give energy to his bitter impressions.

On the contrary, every smile of ridicule, every real or fancied indication of her indifference, dislike, or contempt, arose one after another before him, like malignant spectres, grinning in supernatural scorn. His face became flushed, his pulse varied, as he recurred to the long list of imaginary neglects or insults he had endured; and again he voluntarily inflicted upon himself the mortifications they occasioned.

As he sat thus, as it were devouring his own soul, his fishing implements remained unnoticed at his side, and he heard neither the loud music of the hounds, nor the report of the answering gun, from time to time echoing through the woods. His reveries were at length interrupted by the voice of the stranger, sounding cheerfully in his ear, and awakening him to a perception of reality. He came laden with a variety of game, and exclaimed, as he advanced, —

“Come, let us away home. I have plenty of game,

and you, I dare say, plenty of fish. We shall have a famous supper, and raging appetites. Let us see what you have caught."

"Nothing," said Sybrandt, colouring a little.

"Nothing! O, thou idle or unskilful piscator, what hast thou been doing?"

"Thinking," said the youth, with a sigh.

"Thinking! What has a man to do with thought among the Indians and wild beasts? (Action, boy, action is the word here in my empire of shade. Were I to spend my time in thinking, I and my little ones would starve. I have half a mind to give you no supper to-day."

"I have thought away my appetite already," said the other, somewhat sadly. The stranger eyed him with a glance of keen inquiry.

"Young man," said he, seriously, "you are a scholar; I have found out that, already. But your education, I doubt, is not quite finished. I shall put you through an entire new course, and make a man of you, as well as a scholar. In a few weeks, there will be a meeting of the Mohawks at my court. Until then you will have no opportunity to dispose of your merchandise to advantage; and I know well that an unsuccessful Indian trader can never rise among the frontier men, because he is supposed to want courage, conduct, and perseverance. You must therefore stay with me till after my grand council, and I shall have time to turn over a new leaf with you. You want action, and you shall have it. What say you?"

"My friends will be uneasy at my long absence."

"O, if that is all, I shall send a messenger to Albany in a few days, and he will carry a letter for you. So that objection is got over."

Nobody cares about seeing me, thought Sybrandt.

"What say you; is it a bargain?" said the stranger.

"It is," said the other; and the matter was decided.

"And now for home. O how gloriously hungry I am!" And they hied them homeward with long and hasty strides.

The day was far spent when they arrived at the door of the stranger, and found every thing prepared for them as he had directed. His Indian wife received him with a smile of gladness, and the children flocked round to welcome him, and admire his game. There was little appearance of sentiment, but much good-humoured frankness in the meeting.

"Will you have a book to occupy the evening?" said the stranger, when the night had set in. "I have books, but, in truth, I seldom read them now. They make one lazy, and unfit for action. But I have no objection to your reading."

"I had rather hear you talk," said Sybrandt. Looking round, and perceiving that the Indian wife was absent on her domestic duties, he added, "May I inquire if you don't find your time hang heavy on your hands sometimes, for want of the society you have been accustomed to?"

"Why, no," replied the other; "I cannot say I do. I am never idle in body or mind. As a matter both of necessity and amusement, I hunt almost every day, which gives me appetite, occupation, and rest when I lie down at night. Besides this," added he, smiling, "I exercise dominion over men; I influence at least, if not direct, the affairs of an invisible people, as it were, hid in these woods; and this gives sufficient employment to my mind. There is no study more

interesting than man, and, of all mankind, the savage affords to me a subject of the greatest novelty and interest. It is curious to see how different, yet how much alike, are the civilized and savage types of men. One is a bear-skin in its rough natural state, the other the same skin decked on the edges with red cloth and porcupine quills. The animal it covered is still nothing but a bear."

"You are no admirer of the animal, it seems, in either of his forms," replied Sybrandt.

"You are mistaken; I think him a decent sort of biped enough, and have no quarrel with my fellow-creatures, though I came hither to live in the woods that I might enjoy perpetual exercise without actual hard work, and never-ceasing excitement without ruining myself at the gaming-table, or blasting others for the purpose of keeping myself awake all day."

"Yet I should suppose you would sometimes feel lost for want of the ordinary intercourse of social life—the interchange of thought—nay, the conflict of opinions and interests, which keeps the world from stagnating."

"I am not always alone; the Indians sometimes visit me: but, to be sure, they are no great talkers, except when they make a set speech, when, I assure you, they cut a most respectable figure as orators. But there is never any want of conflicting opinions and interests when the Indian and the white man come in contact. I fear they never will agree. I sometimes almost despair of being able to consummate the plan which has gradually opened itself to my mind during my residence here, and which is now become the leading object of my life."

"May I ask what it is?" said Sybrandt.

"To bring the Indians into the circle of civilized life. I cannot but see, that, if they remain as they are, always a source of disturbance in that great frame of social life which is now enlarging itself in every direction, and will one day, I believe, comprehend the whole of this vast continent, they must perish. Nothing can save them but conforming to the laws, and customs, and occupations, of the whites. I have endeavoured to prepare them gradually for this, and for that purpose have endeavoured to gain their confidence and establish an influence over them. I have succeeded to admiration, and beyond all other white men, with the exception, perhaps, of some of the Catholic missionaries. Yet the truth forces itself on me every moment of my life, and I cannot shut my eyes to it—this influence is founded not on my superiority in the qualifications of a civilized man, but on my capacity to excel even the Indians in war, in hunting, in bearing fatigue and privations, and in endurance of every kind. This is the secret of my power. In proportion as I become a savage, the savages respect me — no more."

The stranger then proceeded to relate a variety of anecdotes illustrative of Indian habits and modes of thinking, all calculated to establish this opinion, and indicating that instinctive, insurmountable wildness of character which rendered, and yet renders, the labour of winning this race into the fold of civilization an almost hopeless task, which even the ardour of faith and the zeal of philanthropy are sometimes tempted to abandon.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE KINGS OF THE WOODS.

THE preceding conversation was interrupted by a slight tap at the door, which was straightway opened, and, to the no small dismay of Sybrandt, the party of Indians whose chief had fallen on his knife and died at the fishing-house, headed by a new chief, silently entered the room in which they were sitting. The stranger received them with courtesy, and motioned them to sit down. They obeyed, and remained without speaking, while they eyed Sybrandt with glances of malignant meaning.

“My children come as friends?” said the stranger.

“The red children still love their father,” replied the chief; “but they come to tell him he has a snake in his wigwam, which they must kill, and take out his teeth.”

The stranger started, and turning aside to Sybrandt, said in an undertone, “How unthinking I have been! I should not have detained you a moment here, after you were able to travel: but fear not; I am your security that not a hair of your head shall be touched while I carry mine on my shoulders.” Then, turning to the chief, he replied to him as follows:

“I understand thy meaning.”

“’Tis well,” said the other.

“To-morrow I shall inquire into this affair.”

“The serpent must go with us to-night. I have

promised the wife and mother of Paskingoe that they shall sing the song of joy to-morrow, at the rising of the sun. The Indian does not lie."

"He is my friend; he is under my protection."

"He cannot be the friend of our white father, and the enemy of his red children."

"He killed Paskingoe in his own defence. Paskingoe and his people were mad."

"Who made them so? The young serpent and his poison. He must go with us — we want him."

"He shall not go. I cannot give him up."

"Then you are no longer our father," replied the chief. "You have told us you were our friend, but it is only the white man's talk. He is never the red man's friend when the white man is a party."

"Stay till the morning," said the stranger, apparently greatly perplexed; "stay till the morning, and I promise that you shall go away satisfied."

"It is good," said the chief: "we will stay. But will the young serpent stay, too?"

"He will; he will not run away like a deer."

"It is good," said the Indian; and they lighted their pipes and continued to smoke for some time in silence.

This colloquy was carried on in the Mohawk tongue, but Sybrandt easily comprehended its object, and, as may be supposed, his feelings were by no means enviable. He remained perfectly passive, however, justly conceiving that his interference would only produce additional irritation in the minds of the Indians.

At length they finished their pipes, and the chief said to the stranger, "Can we remain in our father's wigwam to-night?"

“Will the young white man be safe till to-morrow?”

“He will, unless he tries to run away.”

The stranger made no reply, but led the way to an upper room, where the Indians laid themselves down on the floor, and soon slumbered in that profound quiet characteristic of their race.

An interesting discussion ensued between Sybrandt and the stranger, in which the latter proposed to aid his escape that night, by furnishing him with a guide and a horse, and detaining the Indians in the room where they were sleeping till he was far enough off not to be overtaken.

“And what will be the consequence?” said Sybrandt: “the savages will never forgive you. They will become your enemies, and, if they do not murder you, your wife, and children, you will lose your influence over them from this time. No, sir: the great plan you hope to accomplish shall not be ruined for my sake. I am determined to remain and meet what may come.”

“Faith, you are a fine fellow—something more than a scholar, I see. Be it so. But, I here pledge you my honour, no harm shall come to you but what I will share. Let us to bed; you are safe for to-night. The Indians never violate hospitality.”

It may be supposed Sybrandt did not sleep very sweetly that night, though he apprehended no danger to his slumbers. It was the morrow that he feared: and, when the morrow came, he rose early, and descended into the room they had occupied the night before. The stranger and the Indians were already there, the former dressed in a superb suit of British

uniform, with glittering epaulettes on either shoulder. Round the room were displayed various articles, the most engaging to the Indian fancy, and which they eyed with looks of eager longing, interrupted only for a moment by a glance of far different character at Sybrandt as he entered. After a pause of some minutes, the chief addressed the stranger, as follows:—

“My father, your son had a dream, last night.”

“Ay?” said the stranger smiling; “what was it, my son?”

“Your son,” replied the chief, with great gravity,—“your son dreamed that the Great Spirit appeared to him, and told him his good father had made him a present of his fine suit, and given each of his people six new blankets. Did the Great Spirit speak the truth? or will my father make him a liar?”

The stranger paused a moment. “The Great Spirit said true; the suit and the blankets shall be given. But, my son, I also had a dream last night. The Great White Spirit came to my bedside, and said in a whisper, Thy son, the chief of the Beaver tribe, has forgiven the young trader by whose hand Paskin-goe fell. He has given him to thee to do with him what thou wilt. Did the Great White Spirit speak true?”

The chief looked at his companions, and they at him, in doubt and perplexity.

“I had forgotten,” resumed the stranger; “the Great White Spirit said also, The mother of Paskin-goe has dried up her tears, and his wife ceased her groans, ever since you gave them the beautiful beads and the necklaces of pinchbeck. Did he say true, or did the Great White Spirit lie?”

Again the Indians exchanged significant glances, and then uttered that guttural sound by which they are accustomed to signify their approbation.

“My father,” at length said the chief, “you dream too hard for your son. But you have not made our Great Spirit lie, neither will I make yours. The young serpent is free; but let him take care how he comes among us again. Even my father shall not dream him out of the fire.”

The bargain was consummated; the Indians departed with their finery, and Sybrandt was free. As they disappeared in the forest, old Tjerck, who had watched the result of the embassy with deep solicitude, quavered the war-whoop of the Adirondacks in triumph. An arrow from some unseen bow at the instant whizzed past his ear, and put a stop to his exultation. He, however, preserved the arrow all his life afterward, making it the text of a most excellent tale, which was as little like that we have just related as the description of most landscapes is to the original.

The stranger explained to Sybrandt the preceding colloquy, which had passed in the Mohawk language; and our hero insisted upon repaying him the price of his liberty. But this he would by no means consent to, saying the loss was not his, as the government supplied the means of conciliating the Indians by such presents as might be necessary.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE STRANGER UNDERTAKES THE REFORMATION OF OUR HERO.

SYBRANDT remained with the stranger, whose character and mode of life he admired more and more every day. Of the thousand trammels of civilized life, which, like the invisible ropes and pegs of the Lilliputians, keep the mighty Gulliver, man, bound to the earth, or, at least, chained within a certain prescriptive routine, none but the least irritating were found in this unconventional establishment. There was every thing necessary to the gratification of a wholesome appetite, sound sleep, and rural exercise. There were none of those fretting and factitious wants which, under the disguise of domestic comforts or embellishments, make human beings, that call themselves enlightened, the slaves of that wealth they acquire by the sacrifice of health, pleasure, and liberty. An air of happy freedom reigned every where around; and, though every thing seemed to arrange itself into an easy regularity, it was without effort, without noise, and without the slightest appearance of coercion or authority. The Indian wife always had a smile on her face; the children, freed from eternal nursing and surveillance, gambolled about, the happiest of all God's creatures, and spent those days which Nature has allotted as the period when her offspring shall be free from chains, in all the luxury of playful hilarity. In short, Sybrandt could not help observing, that, while

there appeared to be no fastidiousness, there was, at the same time, a perfect decorum and an unstudied decency.

Every day when the weather permitted, and, indeed, often when a dandy sportsman would have shrunk from the war of the elements, they pursued the manly, exciting sport of hunting. The image of war, especially in this empire of savages and beasts of prey — this course of life gradually awakened the energies of Sybrandt's nature, that had been so long dozing under the influence of the good Dominie Stettinius. He acquired an active vigour of body, together with a quickness of perception and keen attention to what was passing before him, that by degrees encroached deeply on his habit of indolent abstraction. He caught from the stranger something of his fearless, independent carriage, lofty bearing, and impatience of idleness or inaction. In short, he gained a confidence in himself, a self-possession and self-respect, such as he had never felt before, and which freed him from that awkward restraint which had hitherto been the bane of his life. Nevertheless, the cure was not complete; the disease had been deep-seated, and occasional relapses indicated pretty clearly that a return to old scenes and modes of life would assuredly produce a return of the old infirmity.

One stormy day, when the wind blew such a gale as made it dangerous to pursue their daily sport, the stranger found Sybrandt buried in what is known among the simple ones as a brown study, but which among the better sort is dignified with the more lofty title of, abstraction.

"Westbrook," said he, with his usual brief frank-

ness, "the time we have spent together, and the circumstances under which we met, ought to have made us friends by this time. It seems to me that you are getting homesick. If so, say so. You can leave me here as factor for your merchandise, and I pledge myself to render you a true account of the proceeds, the first good opportunity that occurs. How say you, am I right?"

Sybrandt was actually thinking of home, but not with that strange, inexplicable feeling which sickens us of a paradise, and makes us turn with tears of bitter longing to the barren sands or arid mountains consecrated to memory under that cherished name. He had but few, very few pleasurable recollections stored there, and these were buried under a thousand self-inflicted pangs of mortification. He replied to the stranger, in a tone of bitter depression:—

"I was, indeed, thinking of home; but I have no wish to go there, just now."

"Were you not happy?"

"Not very."

"Whose fault was that?"

Sybrandt paused, and a few moments of rapid retrospection convinced him how difficult it was to answer this simple question.

"I don't know," at length he said; "sometimes I think it was my own, sometimes that of others."

"Westbrook," said the stranger, kindly, "did you ever hear the story of the king who was playing at tennis in the midst of his courtiers?"

"I don't recollect," replied he, somewhat surprised.

"Well, I will tell it you. A dispute arose about some point of the game the king was playing, on

which a large stake depended. The king appealed to his courtiers. They were silent. At length one of his gray-headed ministers came into the tennis-court, and, on hearing these doubts, 'Sire,' said he, 'you are wrong.' 'What!,' said the king, — 'do you pronounce me in the wrong without knowing any thing of the matter?' 'Pardon me, sire,' said the other: 'if you had been right, these gentlemen' (turning to the courtiers) 'would not have doubted.' This story will apply to all the actions of man. His self-love and his passions are his courtiers, and whenever they are doubtful or silent as to the question of who is to blame, you may depend upon it *he is*."

Strange as it may appear, Sybrandt had never viewed the matter in this light before, nor asked himself the question of who was answerable for the anguish of mind which, in truth, he had wilfully inflicted on himself. Dominie Stettinius was a good and a learned man, but no philosopher. He had never yet arrived at the conclusion, that learning and wisdom, although actually man and wife, are a thorough fashionable couple, and not always seen together. ✓

"Come," said the stranger, after permitting him to cogitate a reasonable time on his legend — "Come, I have a curiosity, no idle one, to know something more of a young man who (I cannot but see) is capable of acting, yet seems to be prone to think to no purpose. I have long since told you my story, now tell me yours. I see your mind is unhealthy. Let me know the nature of the disease, and, my life on it, I cure you."

"I believe I have nothing to tell. My narrative would have no incident; and without incident even

an epic poem is dull," replied the youth, forcing a melancholy smile to his aid.

"Never mind; I entreat you to tell it. I think I comprehend the case from the very acknowledgment you have just made. Your history, as I suspect, wants action."

Thus solicited, Sybrandt at length overcame his shyness, and gave the detail of his causeless miseries. As he went on, the stranger sometimes smiled, and then again, shook his head. "Strange," said he, at length, when the young man had concluded his singular confession, "strange that a man should pass his whole life in coining distresses, which have no being except in his wayward imagination! Young man, I feel an interest in you. There is that about you which I love and respect, let me find it where I will. I have seen you twice placed in circumstances to try the nerves of the stoutest, looking at danger without winking an eye, and suffering pain without changing a muscle. Such men I acknowledge for my fellow-creatures—my equals. And yet," added he, smiling, after a momentary pause, "and yet you, who stood before a band of drunken savages, with their tomahawks and scalping-knives raised to take your life,—you, who did not even so much as change countenance during a discussion which was to decide whether you were to be given up to be tortured at the stake;—why, you cannot face a woman with whom you have associated, with little intermission, from childhood! You tremble at the idea of entering the parlour of an honest country gentleman, and that gentleman your uncle! You can front death in all its forms of horror, but you cannot stand up before a

laugh, or even endure the mere abstract idea of a laugh conjured up by your own diseased fancy!"

The face and forehead of Sybrandt gradually kindled with alternate flushes of pride and shame, as the stranger proceeded. There was certainly more honey than gall in his speech, but our youth had long been in the habit of turning from the sweet to banquet on the bitter; and the old horror of being derided recurring in full force, caused his heart to swell and his temples to moisten with feeling. He remained tongue-tied, and, if his life had depended upon it, could not have uttered one word.

"Did you ever," continued the stranger, in a tone of banter — "did you ever, in all your classic study, come across a hero, or even a person of tolerable reputation, ashamed or afraid to encounter his equals, setting aside his superiors? The modesty we read of there, as an object of imitation to youth and age, is nothing more than that dignified confidence of merit which never claims honours or rewards, but leaves the world to mete them out according to its own sense of obligation. The antique poets never thought of praising, or of holding up for imitation, that boyish and unmanly infirmity miscalled modesty, which bespeaks an internal sense of weakness or degradation, which makes men for ever ridiculous in their own eyes even when not so in the eyes of others, and which is the eternal, insurmountable obstacle to great actions. There is a glorious effrontery about genius, which causes it to undertake enterprises and accomplish results, that, to bashful cowards, appear beyond the reach of human power."

The word "coward" grated harshly on Sybrandt'

ear, and was appropriated at once to himself by that mental process through which he was accustomed to distil every thing into gall. The stranger noted the workings of his mind, and went on:—

✓ “Nor is the folly of such timid shrinking girlishness in man less contemptible than its cowardice. It is right, therefore, that he should be laughed at for the one, and despised for the other.”

Sybrandt could stand it no longer. He started from his seat, without the slightest awkwardness or diffidence.

“Is this language intended for me, sir? Because, if so, it cancels all obligation on my part. If I am not a man with women, you will find me so with men. No man shall say, or insinuate, that I am a fool or a coward. Did you or did you not apply these epithets to me?”

“As much as falls to your share in your own honest consciousness; no more:” replied the other, with a most provoking indifference. Sybrandt surveyed him leisurely from top to toe, with an air of unflinching defiance.

“Farewell, sir, for the present. I am your guest, and you are my benefactor. I would have been grateful to the end of my life for your hospitality, and the favour of your example; but you have left me nothing now but regrets that I ever accepted the one, or benefited by the other. Farewell, sir. Judge of the extent of my gratitude by my forgiveness of the insult you have just passed upon me. So far the debt is cancelled. Take care, I entreat you, how you run up a new score.”

He was proceeding to quit the house immediately,

when he was arrested by a hearty laugh from the stranger.

"Bravo! good! I honour you, Mr. Westbrook. You have spoken like a high-spirited, honourable gentleman. From my soul I reverence a man of pluck. It is not without reason that courage is held the basis of all the virtues, since without it we may be driven from our best resolves by apprehension of the consequences. Without the courage to despise threats, dangers, death, no man can depend on his other virtues for a single moment. And yet it seems to me that all education tends to pave the way for making cowards of us. The nurse begins by frightening children with stories of ghosts and hobgoblins, and making them afraid to stir in the dark; and the priest ends by frightening the man with horrible pictures of the agonies of death and the torments of futurity. By heaven! it is a matter of surprise to me that all civilized men are not arrant poltroons! But why," added he, after a pause, "why not act and speak at all times, and everywhere, with the same manly, free spirit you have just displayed? With such a face, such a figure, such a heart and mind, who is it that breathes or ever breathed the breath of life, whether man or woman, you need be afraid or ashamed to look full in the eye? Forgive me for thus trying you, or rather for affording you an opportunity of proving to yourself what you really are. No one that has seen you as I have, in situations to test the resolution of any man, would ever dream of your being less than consummately brave; and no one that has conversed with you as I have done, and heard you, day after day, uttering the language of learning

and good-sense, would suspect you of folly, except he were himself a fool. On my soul, what I said was but to aid you to 'know thyself'—the most useful of all lessons to man. Hereafter, when you feel yourself shrinking from the encounter of a lady's eye, or a puppy's glance of ridicule, recollect that you have bearded the lion, called William Johnson, in his den, and never fear the face of man or woman from henceforward. Are we friends again?"

Sybrandt ~~grasped the hand of Sir William~~ in silence, and the incidents of that day exercised an influence over his future fortunes, greater, perhaps, than all the precepts of the worthy Dominie Stettinius or the illustrious examples of classic lore. The force of habit being once mastered, his deportment became every day more free and manly, his conversation more frank and racy. In short, he seemed about to verify the great truth, that, as by yielding to one temptation we prepare the way for submission to another, so an obstacle once surmounted is ever afterward more easily overcome.



CHAPTER XV.

OUR HERO TAKES HIS DEPARTURE.

THERE was an openness about Sir William that invited confidence and inspired imitation. Add to this, he contrived every day to draw Sybrandt out, to make him aware of his own resources of intellect and knowledge, and to animate his consciousness by giving him the post of honour, that is to say, fatigue and danger, in all their forest adventures. He saw that his future happiness, as well as future fortunes, depended on his mind being forced out of its perverted course by excitement, action, and applause. He tried hard to make a man of him, for he judged that Sybrandt was likely to repay the trouble of the lessons he received.

The time now arrived when the meeting of the Mohawk chiefs, to hold long talks and receive presents, was to take place. The relation in which Sir William stood to the Indians was peculiar to these early settlements; when the savages, being numerous and warlike, were able to turn the scale between the mighty French governors of Canada and the puissant governors of New York. It was therefore necessary to conciliate them in the first place by presents, and to fortify that influence by working indirectly on their secret consciousness of the superior power or superior wisdom of the white people. Perhaps the gentleman

of whom we are now speaking exercised, in his day, over these wild and wayward sons of the forest a greater personal influence than any other white man that ever existed. It was not only as the representative of the great king over the water that they respected and obeyed him:—still more, his frankness, integrity, and truth; his courage, his vigour, and his superiority in hunting, in war, in action and endurance, in every thing which constitutes the pride and glory of savages; made these people look up to him with unqualified respect and admiration. He stood alone among them, beyond the protection of the laws of civilization and far from the reach of succour; yet he never suffered wrong or violence from these wild warriors, who might enter his house at midnight, without knocking, and without creating either fear or suspicion. It has often occurred to me that such a man, if any man or any means are adequate to the purpose, might, by voluntarily settling among our Indians, do much to wean them by degrees from their present mode of life. I do not mean that he should go there to receive the emoluments of office, or the profits of trade, or, least of all, as a means of living on the charitable contributions of others; but that he should identify himself with them—become one of their hunters, warriors, sages, and mingle by degrees with their ancient modes of living those feelings and habits of civilized life not incompatible with their present situation. It might be a question, whether the white man would become more of an Indian, or the Indian more of a white man; yet all history indicates to us, that the ancient world was retrieved from barbarism by the agency of a few men of superior

genius, or who had enjoyed superior opportunities of acquiring that knowledge and those habits necessary to civilization. But, enough of this.

Sybrandt wondered to see the majestic grace and self-possession, mingled with respectful courtesy, exhibited by these untutored savages. They presented an example of manly independence in demeanour and language, from which he derived a lesson for his own future conduct. It was curious to see how near they came to the standard of high-breeding, now established as the criterion of refinement. They neither stared at objects to which they were unaccustomed, nor did they for a moment betray either surprise, curiosity, or inferiority. Careless in the glances they cast around, easy in their carriage, unembarrassed in their actions, there was about them an indifference approaching almost to contempt, far more imposing than that assumed to be the characteristic of superior rank in the circles of the great.

Our hero learned some lessons in relation to manner and deportment from the Kings of the woods, that he could hardly have acquired even from a first-rate dancing-master.

It is not my purpose to record the acts and negotiations of Sir William and the council of chiefs. Still less shall I attempt a sketch of their respective orations, which, though they were not so *lengthy* as some we have heard, were very much to the purpose.

The departure of the chiefs was speedily followed by that of Sybrandt, who accompanied a courier despatched by Sir William to New York on the breaking up of the great council.

"I am sorry to lose your society," said Sir William ;

“I shall miss it much this winter. But action—action—action, as the great orator said; action is the life of life—the vivifying spirit of all nature. When I find myself getting low I shall dash into the woods, and the sight of a deer shall console me for the loss of my friend. Farewell. I hope we shall meet again.”

“Do not doubt it,” said Sybrandt: “if you do not come to me, I will one day, if I live, come to you. But you will some time or other visit Albany, and then you shall see —”

“Catalina?” said the other, archly. “Well, a fair lady is worth a far visit, and I think I will come to your wedding, if you will give me due notice; that is to say, if you ever muster courage to look that young lady in the face, who is, I dare say, ten times more ugly—I beg pardon—more formidable, than the one-eyed Paskingoe.”

Sybrandt coloured, and felt some of his old feelings crawling over him; but he repressed them by a great effort, and replied with assumed ease:

“I promise to ask you to my wedding, but my funeral will probably come first, and I will bid you to that.”

“What! a relapse! I thought I had performed a radical cure.” Then, assuming an earnest solemnity, he went on,—“Westbrook, now that you are going among old scenes and associations, guard against a return of old feelings, weaknesses, and self-delusions. When we are distant from each other, remember what I now say; and rely upon it, that, if Catalina is worth the winning, you will win her if you dare. Deference is what is due to every woman, and what every

woman likes; but, if I know the sex, they are such admirers of courage, that they can never be brought to love a man that *fears* even them. Now God be with you, Sybrandt, and so, farewell!"

CHAPTER XVI.

SHOWING THAT OLD SCENES REVIVE OLD HABITS.

THEY parted, with mutual regret, and, as Sybrandt proceeded on his journey, he tried to persuade himself he was all, or might be all, Sir William wished him to be. But certain misgivings and sinkings of the soul, as he turned his thoughts towards home and began to anticipate his reception from his friends, warned him that he must look well to himself and nerve his heart, or he might again sink into what honest Bunyan calls the "slough of Despond," and never rise again.

The little party, consisting of Sybrandt, old Tjerck and the courier, proceeded to the banks of the Mohawk river, where they embarked in a canoe for Schenectady, then the frontier town of all the western settlements of this goodly State, of which it now constitutes one of the antiquities. Not a house, not a vestige of cultivated life, adorned the banks of the stream. Yet all was beautiful: for what is more lovely than the union of crystal waters, verdant meadows, waving forests, and azure skies?—the combination and the master-work of the great Creator! There were men alive, not many years ago, who still remembered what the whole country then was, and whose eyes, though dimmed with age, yet saw what it had since become. The land itself, and the owners of the land, are changed; every animate and inani-

mate object—every thing living, and every thing dead—all changed! The red man is gone, and the white man is in his place. Such are the mutations of the world! Shall we lament them? No. It is the will and the work of Him that made all, governs all, disposes all; and it is all for the best, or chance is Providence, and Providence is chance.

They arrived without accident at Schenectady, which, though partly rebuilt, still exhibited deep and melancholy traces of the deplorable massacre and conflagration of 1689, when the French and Indians surprised the inhabitants in their beds, and set fire to their dwellings.

As Sybrandt approached home, he began to feel sundry decided symptoms of his old disease. He caught himself studying how he should act, and what he should say to his cousin, instead of relying on the circumstances of the moment to direct his conduct. He worked himself up into a worry of doubt, embarrassment, and apprehension; he again suffered the tortures of the sly laughing eye of Catalina, and actually shuddered at the thought of how awkwardly he should behave himself. In short, by the time they came to Albany he had forgot the manly remonstrances of Sir William, and, instead of the joys of a speedy reunion with his friends, felt only the fears of their anticipated ridicule.

He arrived at Albany to dinner, and lingered some time afterward in that strange irresolution which is characteristic of his state of mind. At length old Tjerck got out of all patience, and by his ill-humour brought his young master to a decision. As they approached the sober and venerable mansion-house,

and saw at a distance its old gray walls, half-hid by towering elms, with chimneys pointing to the skies, Sybrandt actually trembled with conflicting emotions. Had it been possible, he would have gone on to the abode of his benefactor without stopping. But his only road lay directly before the mansion-house, and to pass it would be both absurd and disrespectful.

It was now just after sunset, and honest Ariel was walking with his niece on the long piazza, which looked towards the river. The scene was lovely and quiet beyond description, and something had carried the thoughts of Catalina to the absence of Sybrandt. I think it happened to be the anniversary of the day on which he had saved her life.

"I wonder," said she, at length, "what has become of cousin Sybrandt? Is it not time that he should be home? and is it not strange no one has heard of him, uncle?"

"Poor fellow!" said the good-natured Ariel, "to be sure it is. I don't wonder at not hearing from him, for you know the mail don't travel in the wilderness. But he ought to have been home, a long time ago. I am sadly afraid something has happened to him. He was such an awkward fellow: he never could do any thing handy or clever. I never could teach him to ring a pig's nose, for the life of me."

"Yet he was brave as a lion," said the other, musing. "What day of the month is this, uncle?"

"The fifth of June."

"True, the very day." And again she mused.

"I should not be surprised," said Ariel, after a pause, "if he was, either murdered, or a prisoner to the Indians."

"God forbid!" exclaimed Catalina, lifting up her hands, and clasping them together; "God forbid my dear cousin Sybrandt should come to any harm!"

"Aha!" quoth Ariel, "what would the colonel say if he heard this? — 'dear cousin Sybrandt!'"

"He has no right to say any thing, and if he did I would not care. But who is that coming yonder?"

"Where?" said little Ariel, standing on tiptoe.

"Yonder, on the Albany road — two persons on horseback."

"It must be the colonel and his man. He has been to Albany to-day."

"No, it is *not* the colonel," said Catalina; and she looked still more intently on the travellers, whose figures were rendered somewhat indistinct in the twilight now gathering round. They approached the gate which led into the shady avenue winding up to the mansion, and one of them dismounted to open it.

"Who *can* it be?" cried Catalina, while a gentle heaving of her bosom and a little shortness of breath marked a more than ordinary interest in the question.

In a few minutes, the persons on horseback emerged from the wooded ravine which had originally determined the course of the road, and, being now not far off, came into clearer view.

"One of them seems to have a black face," observed Ariel.

"If it should be old Tjerck!" exclaimed the maiden, eagerly.

"No, no," replied the other, despondingly; "I fear we shall never see either him or his young master again;" — and his good heart overflowed to his eyes. By this time the horsemen had dismounted in the dusky eventide.

"Who can it be?" thought Catalina, while a presentiment fluttered about her heart. Sybrandt had distinguished a female figure as he neared the house, and a thrill of mingled pleasure and apprehension came over him. He had ridden at such a lingering pace, that old Tjerck muttered to himself, "Icod, if young massa been hunting a bear, he make more hurry dan to see Miss Catalina!"

Ariel received the young man with shouts of joy and innumerable honest shakes of the hand; but Catalina, remembering with what leisure and deliberation he had approached to receive her welcome, repressed the warm, generous impulses of her heart, and gave him a reception so affectedly flippant and careless that he felt it in his innermost soul. His pride and his feelings were equally wounded, and the moment of meeting between these two young people was the prelude to a thousand after mistakes and misapprehensions. Sybrandt, after receiving, with all his old awkwardness and constraint, the kind congratulations of the rest of the family, made some miserable mumbling attempts at an excuse for going to see his benefactor, and departed with a disappointed heart, and a mind wounded by the consciousness of weakness and inconsistency.

"You don't seem glad to get home again," said the good Dennis, observing that Sybrandt was silent and abstracted; "but I suppose you are tired and sleepy. Well, repose to-night, and to-morrow you shall tell your story."

Sybrandt retired to bed, but not to that balmy rest which a tired body and a quiet mind bring with them evermore. He lay awake, thinking over the past, and

blaming his own wayward follies. He recalled to mind the lessons and the example of Sir William, and, a little before daylight, solemnly resolved that he would cast off the chains of the foul fiend that seemed waiting to seize on him at the moment of his return, and be what he was everywhere but in the presence of the woman he most wished to please. Before he was up in the morning, he heard the cheerful voice of Ariel calling upon him to come forth and eat his breakfast, and tell his story, and go over to the mansion-house, and see him hive the bees, which he pronounced to be on the eve of emigrating, from the commotion he observed among them the day before.

Accordingly, after breakfast, they rode over to the mansion-house, where Sybrandt behaved himself better, and was received more to his liking, than the night before; for Catalina had schooled herself, and softened herself too, by recollecting that she had treated him thus coldly on the anniversary of the day he had saved her from drowning. She inquired the cause of his long absence, and even condescended to say she felt great uneasiness lest he should have been murdered, or taken captive by the hostile Indians and carried into Canada. This sentiment, kindly and unaffectedly uttered, warmed the heart of Sybrandt into a degree of confidence, and he related the history of his trading voyage with a graphic simplicity which gave it additional interest. There is nothing throws greater dignity about a man, and more contributes to make him an object of interest, than encountering and overcoming dangers and sufferings. The tenderness, the love of glory, and the admiration for courage, which are inherent in the female heart, are ever excited and

called forth by the recital of perils or the narrative of enterprising hardihood. Every woman is in this respect a Desdemona, and Catalina was certainly a woman, for she was now eighteen. The moment she heard the history of the adventure of the fishing-house, and the escape from the deputation of the Mohawk chiefs, Sybrandt gained a new interest in her eyes, by being thus associated with danger and death. Under the influence of these feelings, she treated him with a gentle and frank attention, which placed him on good terms with himself, and gave an ease and freedom to his deportment that made Catalina one day observe, with a smile, that he had "certainly met with a dancing-master in the woods."

"But what has become of your admirer, Colonel Sydenham?" asked Sybrandt, with no small trepidation, after finishing the detail of his adventures.

"O, he is gone," said she, slightly blushing. "His regiment was ordered to Fort George, on the lake, not long after you left us."

Sybrandt was pleased with the information, but did not like the blush. His old enemies played about him for a moment, but he whipped them away, and compelled himself to ask other questions, which by degrees led to a relation of what had happened in his absence. During this period, which was only a few months, a great revolution had taken place, which I shall proceed to record with all due fidelity.

CHAPTER XVII.

AN IRRUPTION OF WANDERING ARABS, AND A SWARMING OF BEES.

I HAVE before noticed the inroads made upon the virtuous simplicity of the rural populace among whom is laid the scene of this history. Not content with a variety of innovations, the officers at length committed the enormity of introducing private theatricals. They corrupted an honest Dutchman of the neighbourhood to hire them his barn, and fitted it up as a theatre, in which they performed plays three times a week, to the utter dismay of the good Dominie Stettinius, who justly saw in this pestilent novelty the seeds of mischief to his hitherto simple and innocent flock. The young people were attracted by these outlandish shows; and late hours, family feuds, nightly elopements, and sometimes something worse, were the consequences. The good and pious dominie sighed and fretted at these melancholy symptoms of approaching depravation of manners, and raised his voice from the pulpit every Sunday against the theatre and its consequences to his beloved people, over whom he had watched for almost half a century. But the torrent was too strong for the good man to put back or turn from its course; for such is the sad weakness of human nature, that the best security for its innocence is to keep it ignorant of the very existence of guilt. Both manners and morals seem everywhere at the

mercy of strangers and innovators — of fashions rather than opinions.

But, as if this were not enough, about the period in which the seductions of the barn-theatre began to infect the morals and habits of the young people, and their consequences to appear in the indications I have just recited, a famous new-light preacher made his appearance among them, and roused the very echoes with a strain of fervid and impassioned eloquence, which made converts to a sect that seems destined to extend itself to every climate and every country of the habitable world. (The sober, practical, and rational doctrines and exhortations of the good dominie, though clothed in the language and embellished with the eloquence and grace of a scholar, faded into nothing, compared with the trumpet voice, violent gesture, and furious declamation of the new apostle.) His fold, especially the precious young lambs that had grown up under his eye, and whom he loved, began to stray away; his flock every Sunday showed the absence of some one that was never absent before; and many an empty seat gave token of the backsliding of some inexperienced soul, lured away from the gentle lustre of his pure lamp of truth by the flaring, fiery tail of this erratic meteor.

And still another evil came to beset and confound the good man. A member of the wandering tribe of American Arabs came along, and seduced the wayward affections of the daughter and heiress of his ancient and nearest neighbour, honest Yof Vandervelden. After a while, the short and the long of it was, that worthy Dutchman found himself under the necessity of making a sacrifice of his dislike, to the

honour of the family. He soon afterwards died, and Ananias Gookin, as the wandering Arab was called, took possession of the estate in right of his wife. Then were the honest Dutchmen astonished, confounded, and dismayed at the innovations and improvements of Ananias. He altered his house, he altered his barn, he altered his fences, and he altered every thing. When he had done altering, and exhausted all his ingenuity, he began to pull down, and, finally, one day abducted the old Dutch weathercock, which was brought from Holland, and had pointed due North upon the top of the mansion of the Vanderveldens as far back as the memory of man could reach.

The dominie groaned in spirit, and his firmness forsook him, especially when, a day or two afterward, a whole wagon-load of Squire Gookin's cousins came over to pass a week with him. Before that week expired, they had so confounded the good man with guessing and asking questions, that one night, after being penned in a corner of one of his own fields for upwards of three hours by a couple of these terrible guessers, who pointed out a hundred improvements in his modest, comfortable glebe, and expressed an intention of opening a school to teach all the children English, he left his flock to be devoured by the wolves, and never returned. He had heard of the arrival of a Dutch ship at New York, whither he wended his way, sorrowing, and whence he embarked for his native Holland, to return no more. He left a letter with his blessing and advice to Sybrandt, accompanied by a fine folio copy of the works of Hugo Grotius, in token of his affectionate remembrance. Honest soul! the simplicity of religion and manners which he taught

and exemplified during his whole life has, we doubt, been unprofitably exchanged for the cant of enthusiasm in the one, and boasted refinements in the other.

Catalina and Sybrandt became quite interested in the discussion of some of these matters; but were at length interrupted by a confused and triumphant medley of sounds and voices that startled them both. They ran into the garden, whence the noise proceeded, to see what was the matter, where they found Ariel at the head of all the household troops, man, woman, and child, black, white, and gray. He was furiously pommeling a frying-pan, accompanied by all the others, each of whom had contrived to reinforce his music by some rare contrivance of his or her own. Here stood aunt Nauntje, the cook, jingling a great bunch of keys; and there our old friend Tjerck, who had been summoned by Ariel for the occasion, beating a tin kettle with an old rusty ramrod, while the little imps of the kitchen exaggerated the terrible concert by mustering a truly singular variety of incongruous discords. Over all was heard the eager voice of Ariel, scolding, directing, restraining, and aggravating his familiars, as occasion seemed to require.

A little condensed black cloud appeared hovering over their heads, and sailing about in different directions, to which all their attention seemed to be devoted. As it inclined to approach or recede, the concert became weaker or louder, while keen anxiety and expectation sat on the faces of all. More than once Ariel denounced the imperial Nauntje as an "old fool," for jingling her keys too loud; and as often did Nauntje retort, by declaring that "Massa Auriel"

would scare the creatures into the woods, by the vehemence with which he cudgelled his instrument. At length the wayward community, after enjoying a while their emancipation from the authority of the mother-hive, all at once darted down and settled themselves upon the broad-brimmed hat of honest Ariel; being thereunto incited either by one of the female whims of the queen-bee, or by a fine carnation pink stuck in the hat-band.

Consternation and dismay followed this unaccountable manœuvre; the music ceased, and Ariel stood still for once in his life, with a whole nation quartered on his beaver. It was impossible to resist an inclination to laugh at the oddity of the adventure, but in truth it was no laughing matter. Of all the populace of this world, the bees are the most capricious. There are some people they will permit to handle them with impunity, while they will dart at others with indescribable fury the moment they approach them. I have seen a swarm of young bees taken up by handfuls and put into the hive, without any symptoms of hostility, by a person who either possessed some secret power, or to whom they were attracted by some unaccountable affinity. Such a man was old Tjerck, who now came cautiously forward with a new straw hive, which he held directly over the head of Ariel, desiring him at the same time to stand still for his life. Poor Ariel was the last man in the world to stand still, or to hold his tongue; but on this occasion he played the statue to a miracle. There never was a finer figure than Ariel with the great beehive for a hat, except a fine lady of the year 1831 in a fashionable Parisian bonnet. While the bees were consult-

ing in mysterious hummings about the expediency of removing, and some of them were reconnoitring about his ears, apparently with an intent to make a lodgement there, the little man stood fidgetting, first lifting one leg then the other, hitching his shoulders, and making divers other gestures indicative of dire impatience. At length he could stand it no longer, and roared out—

“You bloody old fool, do you think I am going to stand still here all day?” And thereupon the whole swarm took flight and disappeared across the river, whether alarmed at the noise, or from some sudden freak of her majesty, the queen-bee.

“Dere—dere he go; now massa Auriel got him,” exclaimed Tjerck, in the bitterness of his heart. “I glad of it.”

“And so am I,” said Ariel; “they may go to the devil for me. I wouldn’t have kept still three minutes longer for as many beehives as could stand between here and Jericho.”

“No,” grumbled Tjerck, in an undertone; “massa Auriel nebber tand till, sept when he sleeping in church.”

“Huh!” said old Nauntje; “massa Auriel don’ know no more about bees dan a chipmonk.”

Ariel swore there was not a man in the province understood hiving bees better; but they all gave it against him, and declared with one voice that the loss of the young swarm was entirely owing to his not standing still and holding his tongue. Upon this he denounced them as “a pack of fools,” and departed in wrath, determined not to stay to dinner. In passing the kitchen, however, his natural instinct prompted

him to look in, and the sight of a fine roasting pig, with a skin as white as that of a fashionable belle after a winter's campaign, disarmed him in a moment. He hovered round the hallowed precincts of that hearth until the return of queen Nauntje, to whom he gave sundry directions about roasting the pig, concluding with a solemn injunction to put plenty of summer savoury in the stuffing.

Dinner passed off pleasantly, and Sybrandt was delighted to find that he drank wine with Catalina without its going down the wrong way; nay, that he could actually cut up a pig when everybody was looking at him, without falling into an agony. In the evening they strolled out upon the lawn, and stood on the low green banks of the gliding river, watching the passing vessels as they slipped along; listening to the melodies of lowing herds, tinkling bells, loud rural laughs, and all the combination of sweet peaceful sounds, wafted across the water in the delicious quiet of a long summer twilight. Sybrandt gradually became inspired by the scene and the occasion; and, warming as he spoke, delighted, instructed, and almost astonished Catalina with the scintillations of his newly-fired intellect.

While thus engaged, they saw one of the little black boys come running towards them in great haste, as if something was the matter at home. When he came up, all he could say was to beg Sybrandt to speed to the house, for Hans Pipe, the Indian, was there, very drunk. Accordingly, Sybrandt hastened away as fast as possible, leaving Catalina to return at leisure.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A CIVILIZED SAVAGE.

HANS PIPE, as he was called by the country people around, was an Indian of the Algonquin nation, which had been almost exterminated by the Mohawks in a war that happened many years before the period at which we are now arrived. A large portion of their warriors was cut off, and the remnant of the nation obliged to emigrate into Canada, where they were received and protected by the governor-general. Hans, whose Indian name was Minikoue, or, I drink, justified this appellation, for he even exceeded his fellows in the Indian devotion to fire-water. He had been taken prisoner by the Mohawks, and rescued from torture by the influence of Colonel Vancour, who endeavoured to teach him the habits and manners of civilized life, and to attach him to his family by kindness and protection. But the usual melancholy consequences resulted from these kind and benevolent intentions. The Indian, in proportion as he lost the habits of the savage, acquired the vices of the civilized man, intensified by the wild vigour of barbarism, and mastering him the more readily from the early absence of the habit of self-restraint. His natural cunning was quickened by the acquirement of some of the practices of the white man; and his natural passions, such as revenge, and the love of drinking, were strengthened,—the former by an infinite series of

mortifications, insults, perhaps injuries, received from the white people among whom he sojourned, the latter by facility in the means of gratification.

There are certain plants and fruits and flowers that grow wild in the forest, which improve by being transplanted to the garden and cultivated with care; there are others that shoot forth in the rank and worthless luxuriance of weeds; and there are others that perish under the fostering hand of the most skilful gardener. There are birds and quadrupeds that may be tamed; and others which retain deep traces of their native wildness to the last. So does it seem to be with the race of man. As the Indian orator once said to President Monroe, "The white man is born for the sunshine, the red man for the shade." The white man, the black man, and the man of every colour but the red, may be tamed, and improve by taming. He alone seems, indeed, born for the woods; it is there only that the virtues he possesses can be exercised to the benefit of himself and his tribe. Place him in the sunshine, in the haunts of social and civilized life,—sad is the experience, and woful the truth—he becomes, ninety-nine times in a hundred, the worst, the most mischievous of mongrels; a compound of the ferocity of the savage, and the cunning, deceit, and sensuality of the civilized scoundrel.

So it fell out with Hans Pipe. He became a drunkard and a vagabond; and was finally turned away from Colonel Vancour's house, for having drawn his knife upon one of the black children, who refused to bring him another mug of cider. He was too lazy to work, except at trifling jobs, for which he asked nothing but liquor, and to which nothing else could

incite him. His days were spent in drunkenness, and his nights consumed in prowling about, thieving, or in barns or outhouses, sleeping away the effects of his daily debauch. Sometimes, but very rarely, he would come to the mansion-house, when he was sober, and beg for food or clothing, which was never refused him. Perhaps a more worthless, dangerous and revengeful being never crawled upon the earth, than was this wretched outcast of the savage and civilized world. His appearance was horrible and appalling. His long, lank, raven hair hung about his shoulders, and almost covered his low forehead; his high cheek-bones, flattened nose, wide nostrils, and still wider mouth, together with his miserable garments and dirty habits, made the heart shudder to look upon him. But it was his eye—his malignant, bloodshot eye, circled with the flaming ring of habitual intemperance, that gave the most unequivocal indications of the fiend which kept the citadel of his heart. It discoursed of murder, public or hidden, at midnight or mid-day; of a vengeance which a moment might light up, and which years would not extinguish; of secret plots, and open daring.

It happened that there was no man about the house, or within call, when Hans Pipe came into the kitchen, brutally intoxicated, and, as usual in that condition, insolent and ungovernable. Colonel Vancour had ridden out after dinner, on a visit of business; the labourers had not yet returned from the fields; and Ariel had sallied forth to expatiate on the delights of the roasted pig to his neighbour, Mynheer Frelinghuysen. Sybrandt found the miserable, degraded being brandishing his club, and clamoring for

more liquor. He was enraged into that sort of half-wilful madness which drunkenness often produces, and which is not so much the absence of reason, as of a disposition to obey its dictates. The little black boys were cowering in corners, afraid to run away, and even the redoubtable Aunt Nauntje shrunk from asserting her authority in her own peculiar dominion.

Sybrandt at first tried to soothe Captain Pipe, as he called himself, into something like good-humour, in hopes he would go away peaceably. But the captain had lost all control of himself, or did not choose to exert it, and answered our hero with brutal threats against the whole household unless his wishes were complied with. As the discussion went on he grew so indecently abusive, that Madam Vancour and Catalina, whose apprehensions had called them to the spot, were glad to retire out of hearing. Sybrandt became angry, and, at length, as the captain was proceeding to force open a cupboard where he expected to find liquor, seized him by the shoulders and jerked him back with such force as to send him reeling to the other extremity of the kitchen. The fury of the madman redoubled. He seemed all at once to become steady, and, advancing quickly towards Sybrandt, who had no weapon in his hand, dealt him a blow with his heavy walking-stick, which, had it not failed of full effect, would have incapacitated him for further effort at once. Fortunately, Sybrandt, though taken by surprise, preserved his head by a quick motion on one side; but the stroke fell on his left shoulder, with a force that made him reel. The little black boys cried out with all their might; old Nauntje sallied forth as fast as her limbs could carry her, to

call for help, and Catalina, uttering a piercing shriek, flew into the house for the colonel's sword, with which she returned in a minute.

But the contest was over before she arrived. Captain Pipe, seeing his antagonist partly disabled by the blow he had given, and having become infuriated with rage, was now a perfect savage, reckless of every thing but vengeance, and panting for blood. He drew the long knife which he always wore about him since he was cast off by the colonel, and, flourishing it in the air with a shrill demoniac shout, he made a mortal lunge at the heart of our hero, whose only defence was in his right arm and the keenness with which he watched the motions of the enemy. The blow was well aimed, but the activity and coolness of Sybrandt enabled him to escape it by darting on one side. The knife passed through his clothes, just under the left arm, and at the instant the young man seized the miscreant, holding him so tightly that he could not readily extricate his weapon. A momentary yet desperate struggle ensued, which ended in Sybrandt's tripping up the heels of his adversary, and at the same moment throwing him backwards with such force that he fell upon one of the great andirons in the fireplace, and lay senseless. The knife remained clenched in his hand; but his eyes were closed, and the blood flowed freely from the back of his head.

At this moment Catalina returned with the sword, which she implored Sybrandt to accept. "The wretch is not dead," said she; "I see the motion of his breathing. He is only practising one of his savage arts upon you. Dear Sybrandt, take the sword; and — and — do not kill him, but stand on your defence." The

youth long remembered the, "dear Sybrandt," and so did the Indian, who, as Catalina had shrewdly suspected, was only playing 'possum, as the phrase is in rare old Virginia; that is, only making believe he was insensible. He intended to watch his opportunity, the moment he recovered a little, to jump up and accomplish the destruction of his victim. But the gift of the sword and the caution of Catalina defeated his intention, and engendered in his heart a feeling of determined vengeance, that afterward more than once put the life of that young lady in imminent peril.

The adventure ended in the arrival of some of the neighbours, whom the cries of Aunt Nauntje had brought to her aid, and the depositing of Captain Pipe in prison, where he expiated his violence by a confinement of several weeks. Here he had full leisure to brood over his revenge, and lay his plans for its gratification. When the period of his imprisonment expired, he adopted an entirely new mode of life. He became perfectly temperate, docile, and industrious. By degrees, he gained the pity and good-will of the neighbourhood, got plenty of work, and saved every penny of his wages. Colonel Vancour and his family forgave, and encouraged him, not only by employment, but by various little presents of money and clothes. Among the rest, Catalina, although she always shuddered at his approach, presented him with a Bible, which he was constantly found poring over in his hours of leisure; for he had been taught to read while under the patronage of Colonel Vancour. He constantly attended church, and became a communicant, to the great delight of many pious, well-meaning people, who viewed him as a brand rescued from the fire.

But old Tjerck, who had been a prisoner in his youth among the Indians, shook his wise gray head, and often said, "He no good Christian — not he. I see de debbil Indian in he eye yet. When Indian most good, den he going to be most worst. I know him; he like de painter — he most quiet when he jist going to jump." But a white prophet has little honour in his own country, much less a black one.

CHAPTER XIX.

ADDITIONAL TRAITS OF THE CIVILIZED SAVAGE.

WHEN Captain Pipe had saved money enough for the purpose, he one day went to Albany, and bought him a handsome musket, to shoot ducks with, as he said. From this date his industry flagged not a little, and he passed much of his time in the woods along the river; and sometimes nobody knew where he was gone or what was his object. His object, his sole object, was revenge. He hated Colonel Vancour, because his protection had been forfeited by base ingratitude; he hated Sybrandt, for having wounded and conquered him; and, above all, he hated Catalina, for having robbed him of one of the sweetest moments of revenge, by cautioning Sybrandt against his wiles, and furnishing him with a weapon to defeat them. Finally, he knew that he could consummate his revenge on all three, by taking the life of Catalina. This he intended to do on the first safe opportunity, and then flee into Canada to the remnant of his tribe. With this intent, the moment he had got the musket, which (by enabling him to commit the crime unseen) was safer than his knife, he set about his design with the patience, and cunning, and perseverance, which savages are known to exercise in the prosecution of their vindictive schemes. Still, whatever may be the intensity of the Indian's desire for vengeance, it is in some measure a point of honour to achieve it at the

least possible risk to himself. In all their undertakings, the savages never wantonly or unnecessarily trifle with their own safety. They die bravely, but they seldom seek death.

Wherever Catalina went he kept her in his eye, hovering and lounging at a distance, apparently taking no notice of her, but intent on his game. In the daytime he was prowling about the deep glen we have described as once a favourite resort of Sybrandt, in hopes the young lady might chance to pay it a visit; and at night he haunted the vicinity of the mansion-house, like a hungry wolf thirsting for the blood of his victim. The barking of the dogs often excited the notice of the household, who believed it was occasioned by the maraudings of wild beasts, which at that time were no uncommon visitors. On one or two occasions a watch was set; but nothing was discovered, for the enemy was too wary.

One dark, cloudy night, in the sultry month of August, Catalina was sitting at her window, which opened towards a copse of bushes and vines that had been suffered to grow up in wild luxuriance, for the purpose of sheltering a hundred little birds, that sung, and built their nests, and reared their young in safety among the tangled branches. It had rained early in the evening, leaving a heavy sky, loaded with vapours, and a sweltering heat in the air, that disposed both mind and body to indolent relaxation. Swarms of little fire-flies flitted gayly among the grass and foliage, illuminating the obscurity; and, afar, the lazy lightnings flashed dimly at intervals upon the bosom of the dun, motionless clouds. Finding that the light in her room attracted a variety of the wandering insects

of the night, Catalina removed it into a little closet adjoining, and, seating herself again at the window, indulged a long glance at the past, a long and anxious look into the future.

For some time now, the hearts of Sybrandt and Catalina had been quietly and imperceptibly drawing nearer to each other. As they were more together, the former gradually overcame his shy awkwardness, and that propensity to create mortifications to himself which had been the curse of his early life. Having no one to excite jealousy, and no fear of ridicule before his eyes, his heart and his intellect gradually budded, blossomed, and expanded into full maturity; he gained in polish from association with a sprightly, cultivated woman; and the good-humour and spirit which had been repressed by his great talents for self-torment day by day more fearlessly asserted themselves. He was fast becoming what nature had intended, — an object of interest and consideration to all around him; and the star of woman was gradually leading him to the haven of happiness as well as distinction.

“How much my cousin Sybrandt improves every day,” thought Catalina, as she sat at the open window, and sighed to the silence of night and darkness. The family, all but herself, had long retired to repose, when suddenly a loud growling of the dogs awoke her from her revery. At the same instant she thought she distinguished something or somebody crouching about the little copse-wood. In another instant she distinctly heard something like the shutting of a penknife, and saw a number of sparks of fire flash in the obscurity whence the sound seemed to proceed. The young lady started, and was reflecting for a moment upon

what this could mean, when the same clicking and the same flashing of sparks of fire occurred, followed by a sort of hissing, and a blue flame rising apparently out of the earth. The dogs now began to bark most furiously, and Catalina, shutting her window, went to bed. She pondered for a while on the odd things she had witnessed; but soon the vision of a tall, dark-eyed youth, with teeth whiter than her own fair bosom or all Afric's ivory, flitted before her half-sleeping, half-waking fancy, and, closing her bright blue eye with gentle pressure, prompted her innocent sleep with a thousand glowing visions of future happiness.

Some little discussion took place at breakfast concerning the uproar among the dogs, and Catalina mentioned what she had seen. The general opinion was, that the noise was imaginary or accidental; the sparks, nothing more than fire-flies; and the blue flame, a will-o'-the-wisp. In a little while the whole was forgotten, nor would it ever have been recalled to their recollection but for a circumstance which took place not long afterward.

CHAPTER XX.

A HIT AND A MISS.

CATALINA, a few days, or rather, as I believe, the very next day after the appearance of the will-o'-the-wisp, went to Albany on a visit of a week to one of her friends. It was customary at that time to make little journeys as well as great ones on horseback, and Catalina was fond of an exercise in which she excelled. In returning from this visit she was caught in a heavy shower, which obliged her to change her dress, and the maid had placed the wet garments on an old-fashioned high-backed chair, just before her chamber window, for the purpose of drying them.

"What, *you* here!" cried Ariel, who had just entered through the garden, as usual, that he might have a chance of reconnoitring the kitchen; "you here!—why, I'll swear I saw either you or your ghost sitting at the window as I came in."

Catalina smiled, and explained the cause of his mistake.

"By Jove!" cried Ariel, "I must get your woman to dress me up a scarecrow for my cornfield, for I never saw any thing more natural."

About ten in the evening of that day, as the whole family, together with Sybrandt and Ariel—the latter, as usual, fast asleep in his chair—were sitting around the supper-table, they were startled by the report of a gun close to the rear of the house, as it seemed, fol-

lowed by a loud barking of the dogs. Sybrandt and Ariel ran out of the back door to see what was the matter, and found the whole population of the kitchen in great commotion, talking all together, each one telling what was known or imagined. One declared that the gun was fired from the little copse-wood, another from behind the raspberry bushes, a third from behind the garden-gate; and a fourth was sure he saw a man jump over the fence immediately after the report of the gun. As usual in such cases, it was impossible to come at the truth, and, as no harm seemed to have been done, most people came to the conclusion that none was intended. On returning to her room, Catalina found the chair on which her wet garments had been placed to dry, lying on the floor. It was one of those tall, top-heavy affairs common of old, with a framed seat and back which respectively included stuffed portions, in this case covered with damask. It seemed to have been violently overturned, but her maid solemnly declared that she had not been in the room since her mistress left it, and the whole household declared the same. The mystery, therefore, remained unexplained.

The next morning, however, when the maid came to fold up the dress, as she had been told to do, she was astonished to find it perforated with round holes in two places.

“Lord, young missee!” exclaimed she, “what have you done to your riding-habit? It’s all full of holes, I declare!” Catalina was puzzled to death. She tried to recollect where and how it was possible they could have come there, but could think of nothing to account for them. In examining the old chair to see if

there was any thing there that might throw light on the matter, Catalina at length observed a small hole in the damask, about the size of those in her riding-habit, into which she ran her taper finger, and, feeling something hard, with some little difficulty drew forth a leaden bullet. The maid shrieked, and the young lady turned pale at the association of circumstances that instantly presented themselves to her mind, accompanied by the recollection of the strange appearances she had witnessed a few nights before.

The girl was eagerly running to exhibit the bullet to Madam Vancour and the colonel, when Catalina interposed, and directed her to remain where she was. The young lady then sat down and reflected on the course it was proper to pursue. She knew the uneasiness, nay, misery, she would inflict, (on her mother especially), by communicating circumstances which seemed sufficiently to indicate that she had some secret enemy who sought her life; and she doubted whether any measures that might be adopted to secure the assassin or defend her in future from his designs would be effectual. At length Sybrandt occurred to her, as one who might most secretly investigate this affair, and afford her in the mean time protection as well as advice. Accordingly she resolved to communicate the whole affair to him on the earliest occasion. She then enjoined her attendant to silence, under penalty of her highest displeasure. The little maid was sadly mortified at losing the opportunity of telling such a wonderful story, but, being greatly attached to her young mistress, to whom she had been given at the moment of her birth, she reluctantly obeyed.

Sybrandt came over soon after, to inquire if any new discoveries had been made, for he could not help cherishing certain vague suspicions that there must be something more than chance or fancy in the discharge of the gun, and the phenomena heretofore described. Catalina invited him to walk in the garden, and there disclosed all the particulars recorded in the preceding pages, up to the discovery of the bullet, which she exhibited. The young man shuddered, while at the same time his eye flashed fire. He could scarcely restrain himself from catching Catalina in his arms, and pressing her to his bosom, as mothers embrace their babes when they apprehend the approach of danger. He gazed on her for some moments with intense interest, and then exclaimed:—

“Dear Catalina! I will protect and defend you with my life, and all my life!”

“I know you will, Sybrandt,” replied she, with a full look of more than gratitude. “I know you will, for you have risked it once already for me. But perhaps, after all, it may be accident, the firing of this gun.”

Sybrandt shook his head. “I would not needlessly alarm you; but it is plain to me that there was murder meant. The appearances you saw that night in the copse-wood are now clearly explained to my mind. The click you heard and described as resembling the opening or shutting of a penknife was, I have no doubt, the cocking of a gun; the sparks were those of the flint; and the flame, the flashing of the pan. I recollect it was a damp, wet evening, which accounts for the gun missing fire.”

The explanation was clear; Catalina felt a faintness come over her, and leaned heavily on his arm.

"Go on," said she, gasping for breath: "go on; let me know the worst I am to expect."

"I will; for it is necessary to your future safety. No doubt the villain, whoever he is, mistook the clothes on the back of the chair, which you say was standing directly before the window, for you, and — and —" Here the increasing weight of Catalina arrested his attention, and, looking in her face, he saw her pale as death. In a moment after, her strength forsook her, and she sank in his arms, overpowered by the sense of past as well as future probable dangers. Sybrandt placed her softly upon a little grass terrace, hid from view by a wilderness of flowering shrubs, and, supporting her head on his bosom, in wild perturbation awaited her recovery. In a little while she opened her eyes, blushed, and raised herself from his arms.

At length she said, with a languid smile, "You must forgive me, I am but a woman."

"And I am but a man," said Sybrandt warmly; "yet here I swear never to rest till I have dragged this hidden wretch to light and punishment. And if you, my dear cousin, will allow me, I here solemnly devote myself to your safety from this time forward. When I am not by your side, I will be hovering around you unseen, watching every being that approaches you, or searching every corner where an enemy might conceal himself. Do you — do you value me sufficiently to trust me with the precious charge?"

The soft and swelling bosom of Catalina heaved, as she looked in his face with glistening eyes and answered,

"I *do* value you sufficiently, and I *will* trust my cousin. Whom else can I trust? I dare not tell the

story of this bullet to my father and mother; for it would plant thorns in their pillow, and destroy their happiness. I *must* trust you," added she;—"and if I were not obliged to do it, still I believe I *should* trust you."

"Dear Catalina! But you know me—that is enough."

"Yes, we know each other," replied she, with a look of unbounded reliance and affection. Sybrandt did not take advantage of this moment to tell a tale of love. There was something too awful and affecting in the circumstances that gave rise to this interview. The idea of the death that seemed hovering over her; of the secret midnight murderer who was besetting her steps wherever she went, and watching her sleeping and waking, communicated to her an air of sanctity, and gave to her glowing beauty, her confiding words and loving looks, a holy innocence, which, while it melted the soul in unutterable tenderness, repressed every selfish wish and every sensual desire. It was settled, ere they separated, that Catalina should refrain from going out in future, alone, or in the dusk of the evening, and should never show herself at the window, after dark, until Sybrandt had taken every measure to investigate this mysterious affair, and detect the would-be assassin. To this object he was now about to devote his exclusive attention, animated by his love, as well as by the hope that, guided as he should be by a latent suspicion which had risen up in his mind, he might succeed in the attempt.

"What the devil have you two been doing all this while in the garden?" cried Ariel, who had arrived

during their absence. And he looked very knowing as he asked the question.

"Picking flowers," answered Catalina, blushing, and then turning pale.

"Picking a quarrel, I should rather suppose, by your looks"; and then he began to banter them a little: but, seeing the pain it gave them both, he was too good-natured to pursue the amusement. Honest Ariel never uttered a maxim in his life, but he acted upon a very good one, to wit, never to carry jesting to the verge of malignity, as many people do. When he saw he gave pain, he desisted in a moment. Perhaps he might have been a little influenced in his self-denial on this occasion by a sly retort of Catalina, who, in reply to an assertion that he overheard their whisperings, observed, with some of her wonted arch significance, that "it was only the humming of the bees."

Sybrandt soon after took his leave, declining an invitation from Ariel to go and see the great ox, which the gourmand visited every day, and on whose fat sirloin he banqueted in delicious foretaste. The young man pursued his way homeward in deep meditation, of a mingled tone of pleasure and pain. The delight of having, as he could not but fancy, gained an interest in the heart of Catalina thrilled through his frame. Yet the cup was dashed with black and bitter ingredients. The treasure which he longed one day to make his own was in danger of being torn from him by some unseen and unknown hand, against which it behooved him to guard with sleepless vigilance. The dark idea of death mingled with bright visions of future felicity. His anticipations seemed

like flowers blooming on the verge of the grave, and the grim spectre of mortality stalked hand in hand with the smiling cherubs, Love and Hope. Out of these conflicting feelings arose, however, a fixed determination to devote his time, his talents, and his life, if necessary, to the great purpose which now took possession of his whole soul.

CHAPTER XXI.

A TRIAL OF SKILL.

IN casting about among the population of the vicinage, there was but one person on whom Sybrandt could fasten the slightest suspicion, and that was Captain Pipe. He knew the persevering spirit of revenge which animates the sons of the forest, and the patience with which they watch and wait the moment of attaining their object. He remembered the bitter resentment he had expressed at being discarded by Colonel Vancour, and recalled to mind the look of malignity he had cast on Catalina, as they were carrying him to prison on the day of the quarrel at the mansion-house. He knew that an Indian never forgives. His sudden change after his release from durance—his apparent piety, industry, and sobriety, and the circumstance of the purchase of the gun—all arose in succession to the recollection of Sybrandt, and seemed to indicate some plan in the mind of the Indian. There was no one else he could suspect; for the character of the neighbourhood was that of sober, quiet simplicity, and no strangers had been known to visit it for a long time past. The result of these reflections was a determination to watch the motions of Captain Pipe from that time forward, and, if possible, to do so without exciting his mistrust.

His first step was to tempt him to remain under his observation, by offering him high wages in the employ

of Mr. Dennis Vancour. Accordingly, he sought him out for the purpose, and the Indian acceded to his proposal without any apparent suspicion of his real object. He came the next day; and that day, and every other day, Sybrandt, under various pretences, took care to have him perpetually under his eye, avoiding every appearance of design. The Indian had his eye on him, also, and though he discovered no indications of being aware of this perpetual supervision, his own conscious heart whispered a criminality that redoubled his watchful self-command.

"What have you done with your musket, captain?" said Sybrandt, one day, suddenly; and he fancied he could detect a slight start, as the Indian caught the question. It was, however, so almost imperceptible that it might have been mere fancy.

"I left it at home," said he.

"Why so? There is plenty of game about this house, as well as at Colonel Vancour's."

"I never heard there was much game about the colonel's."

"O, plenty! Fine shooting, especially in the night. The birds sometimes sit in the windows to be shot at."

The Indian, who was at that moment stooping, turned an upward glance of scorn at Sybrandt.

"I am no fool—the Indian's game does not sit in the windows."

"Why not? Suppose you were to see a beautiful deer, standing looking out of a window at night, would you not be tempted to shoot it?"

"Maybe I might," said the captain, gruffly.

"But if your gun were to miss fire on account of

the damp, or the deer was to turn out only a sham, what would you do then, captain?" said Sybrandt, affecting to be in jest.

"I'd look sharper another time."

Sybrandt fancied he was probing the Indian without his perceiving it, but he understood the allegory perfectly, and only wrapped himself up the more closely in the impenetrable folds of savage hypocrisy. He never went out of sight of the house during the day, and, though Sybrandt took every means for the purpose, he could never ascertain that he was absent at night. On one occasion he rode out, taking care to say, in the hearing of the captain, that he was going to Albany, and should not return till the morrow. He then actually went to the city, from whence he returned after midnight, leaving his horse in a field at a considerable distance. He found that the captain had not left the house, nor did he leave it that night.

By degrees he appeared to relax his watchfulness, for the purpose of throwing the captain off his guard. He left him frequently, but it was only to visit Catalina, who always received him with a gentle melancholy welcome, that moved him almost to tears. "You come so seldom now; but I know the reason, and thank you," would she say. It was evident that she laboured under an unconquerable depression. There was no longer any elasticity of spirits, and the roses of her cheek gradually changed to lilies. Sybrandt's heart would swell with sorrowful tenderness when he saw how she suffered, under the consciousness that the arrow of death was pointed at her bosom, she knew not when or by whom, and that every moment

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might be her last. An inexpressible tenderness, a solemn sympathy, a union of feelings partaking of time and eternity, grew up between them; and their affections became almost as pure as those of the fabled spirits with which imagination has peopled the region of the skies.

But the caution of the savage never slept for a moment; and, so far as any one knew, he never availed himself of the absence of Sybrandt to neglect his employment, and leave the house, except for a few moments at a time. Still, suspicion lingered in the mind of Sybrandt, and when, finally, the captain had finished his work, and there was no longer any pretext for retaining him, he relaxed not his vigilance, but continued to keep a wary eye upon him wherever he went. There are no people in the world, perhaps, so cunning and distrustful, so expert in surprising and so difficult to be surprised, as the sons of the forest. Continually at war, either with their neighbours or with the wild beasts, they are for ever under the necessity of perpetual circumspection. A thousand appearances and indications that escape the notice of civilized men, convey lessons of caution and experience to the savage: like the tracks in the forest, which the white man cannot see, they are visible to the Indian, and serve either as guides to pursue or warnings to avoid an enemy. Thus, notwithstanding all the care Sybrandt took to disguise his system of espionage, the instinct of Captain Pipe very soon taught him that he was suspected and watched.

One day, not many days after the period of quitting his employment at Mr. Dennis Vancour's, he came over to the mansion-house, and announced his

intention of quitting that part of the country, and spending the rest of his days among the remnant of his countrymen in Canada. "You prevented my being burned by the Mohawks," said he to Colonel Vancour; "you saved my life, but you turned me out of doors. The Indian never forgets." The colonel gave him a variety of little presents that would be useful among his countrymen, telling him, at the same time, to remember what he owed to the white men, and to be their friend whenever it was in his power.

"The Indian never forgets — nor forgives," replied the captain, pronouncing the latter part of the sentence to himself, and grating his teeth. Colonel Vancour was not deceived. He said in his heart, "That fellow is the enemy of me and mine; thank Heaven, he is going away for ever."

CHAPTER XXII.

OUR HERO LOSES HIS CHARACTER FOR MORALS AND GALLANTRY.

NEXT day, the miserable cabin which the captain had built for himself was found shut up and deserted. The Indian had been seen at daylight, with his gun and his pack, wending his course Northward, on his way to Canada, as was supposed. His departure freed Catalina from the load of cares, fears, and anxieties which had oppressed her for months past. This dejection, and the total cessation of her rural rides and rambles, had affected the health of that young lady, and attracted the notice of her parents. They frequently questioned her on the cause, but she either denied the effect, or passed the subject off with evasions, which only excited increased anxiety as well as curiosity. They had, in vain, urged her to resume her usual amusements and exercises: but now, freed in a great measure from her apprehensions of Captain Pipe, she soon gathered courage and spirits to smile and be happy again.

It was not so with Sybrandt. He could not conquer his suspicions that the captain was lurking somewhere in the woods, not far off. He had traced him about three miles on the road towards the North, and there lost sight of him; nor could he find, by the most minute inquiries, that he had been seen on any other. But he thought it would be cruel to mention these misgivings to Catalina. He contented himself

with being with her wherever she went, and mounting guard about the mansion-house the better part of every night. Honest Dennis took him to task, more than once, for the nightly dissipations in which it was suspected he now indulged, and Sybrandt had the painful mortification of seeing that he was daily offending his benefactor almost past forgiveness. The news of his having become such a rake soon spread abroad ;—for what secret was ever kept in a country neighbourhood? It reached the mansion-house, with divers handsome additions, such as that of gambling, drinking, and seduction. The colonel and Madam Vancour began to behave coolly towards him: Catalina reproached him only with her looks and increasing paleness. She withdrew herself gradually from his society, and seldom came into the room when he happened to be on a visit.

Sybrandt was half-distracted with perplexing anguish. He asked of himself whether he should poison the happiness of Catalina and her parents, by telling them the cause of his nocturnal rambles; or leave the poor girl in ignorance, and unprotected; or sacrifice himself, his character, and his happiness. “It is better that she should believe me a sot and a profligate,” thought he, “than wither and fade, as she did before, in the constant apprehension of being murdered. If there must be a victim, it shall be myself.” He continued his course of watchfulness, and by degrees the supposed irregularities of his conduct banished him from the society of her he most loved on earth. Catalina refused any longer to see him, and now seldom went abroad, except once in a great while to Albany with her mother.

Observing the paleness and growing melancholy of their daughter, the colonel and Madam Vancour, after consulting together, and comparing various circumstances, finally agreed in the supposition that Catalina was attached to her cousin, whose ill-conduct had occasioned her unhappiness. In that case each agreed it was best to separate the young people for some time; and accordingly it was resolved to accept an invitation for Catalina, from a near relative, to come and spend the winter with her in New York. "The sooner the better," said the colonel: "it is now late in autumn, and I will take her to town immediately."

The daughter offered no objections, and the preparations were soon made. It was not customary to travel with so many trunks and bandboxes as young ladies must carry along in these days. The next time Sybrandt called at the mansion-house with a message from his benefactor, Catalina said to herself she would see him once, only once, before she went away for so many months. "I owe him for a life which he has rendered of little worth; but I will see him once more," said she to herself.

She went down stairs, where she found Sybrandt alone. The old people had gone out to pay a morning visit. Sybrandt started at the alteration a few weeks had produced in the poor girl, and she shrunk at his hollow cheeks and sunken eyes. "It is remorse and dissipation," thought she. Rallying the pride and dignity of virtuous woman, she, however, addressed him with an unreserved kindness that affected him deeply.

"I am going," said she, "to spend the winter in New York. We set out the day after to-morrow."

"Thank God! thank God!" cried Sybrandt, with clasped hands.

Indignation swelled the heart of the young lady at this ungallant, nay, insulting exclamation. A sudden paleness was instantly succeeded by a flush of rosy red, and a flash of her bright blue eye. This too passed away, and a paleness still more deadly succeeded.

At length she rallied. "So, you are glad I am going," she said, with a languid smile.

"O, yes, rejoiced beyond measure."

"Indeed!" said she, and tears gathered in her eyes. "Indeed — you — you — but I cannot help admiring your frankness. I see you are no hypocrite, *now* at least."

Sybrandt all at once recollected himself, and coloured at the sudden perception of the apparent rudeness of his conduct.

"Forgive me, dear Catalina. I did not know what I was saying, or rather I was not conscious at the moment of the strange appearance my words would have. Forgive me."

"I do; but," — added she, with a mingling of wounded pride and affection — "But, may I ask, cousin Sybrandt, if you really meant what you said?"

"I did; but" —

"Enough. Good-by. Since you are so happy, it is needless for me to wish your happiness. But I do wish it with all my soul. It will be long before we meet again. Good-by."

"Stay, dear cousin, dear Catalina."

"'Dear Catalina!'", repeated she, with bitter scorn. "Do we thank God when we part with those who

are dear to us? Spare your hypocrisy, sir, and take my last farewell."

"Catalina, before you go, I will account for my conduct. Permit me to see you to-morrow; then all shall be explained."

"All is explained, already. I am now satisfied, quite satisfied;" and she moved slowly towards the door.

"You will one day be sorry for this. O, hear me, I beseech you, now, since I am not to see you again;" and he sought to intercept her.

"Let me pass, sir," cried she, passionately. "I say again, I want no explanations. Your words and actions have both been sufficiently expressive of late. Let me pass."

He obeyed her, bowing lowly and sorrowfully. At the door she turned full upon him, and, clasping her hands, exclaimed with fervour, "Thank God, I *am* going!"

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE PIPE IS BROKEN AT LAST.

SYBRANDT went away in bitterness of heart, but with a determination, if possible, to see Catalina once again before she departed, and give her a full explanation of his late conduct. In the mean time he did not, for a moment, relax in his vigilance. The night turned out dark and blustering; the frost-bitten leaves fell thick before the damp, piercing, north-east wind, whose shrill moanings mingled with the dashing of the waves along the shores of the river. The young man was on his watch, as usual when the night set in, and, as usual, nothing occurred to excite suspicion, until about ten o'clock, when he saw the window of Catalina's room raised, and the little black waiting-maid standing with a light before it, calling to some one in the kitchen. Immediately after, he fancied he heard a more than usual stir in the copse-wood, close by where he stood, and that he could distinguish in the pauses of the wind the suppressed breathing of some one near. The darkness was now intense, and no object could be distinctly seen save those immediately in the range of the light from the window. A shadow passing to and fro within the room showed that some one beside the dusky attendant was there, and his heart beat thick with agony while it whispered it must be Catalina. The low breathing still continued, and became quicker and quicker. Shall I

call out to Catalina to beware? thought he. No: that would only bring her to the window to see what was the matter. Shall I go and alarm the house? No: in the interim her life may be taken. — Quick as thought these ideas crossed his mind, and quick as thought he darted into the thicket, as he beheld Catalina approach the window to speak to some one below, and heard a clicking sound like the cocking of a gun. As he did so he distinguished a single low exclamation of surprise, and, immediately, some one seemed making his way violently through the branches. Sybrandt followed the sound as fast as possible, and once or twice fancied he saw something moving a little way before him. But, whatever it was, it evaded all his exertions, and, favoured by the darkness of the night, escaped his pursuit. On his return, he found the shutters of Catalina's room closed, and, believing her safe for the night, determined not to alarm the family.

The next day, Catalina, unconscious of the danger that hovered around her, took a fancy to stroll to the little rocky dell we have heretofore described as a favourite resort of Sybrandt, where he was once accustomed to retire to conjure up spectres of misery and mortification. In happier times they had been used to visit it together, and it was associated in the mind of Catalina with many hours of innocent enjoyment. She wished to see it once more before she left the country; led by that attractive sympathy which forever draws the heart towards scenes of past felicity. The morning was one of the favourite progeny of Autumn. The indications of the storm the night before had passed away, and were succeeded by a still, clear and yet hazy, sky, a pure elastic air, that never

fail to waken pleasant feelings in the heart where they are not asleep for ever. As she passed onward, the blue-bird chirped his plaintive notes of farewell ere he went to seek the summer in some more genial climate; the grasshoppers, awakened from the torpor of the chilly night, were sporting as gayly as ever, forgetful of the past, and happily careless of the future; the grass under her feet began to show a pale and sickly yellowness; and, every instant, some portion of the party-coloured robes of the forest fell whispering to the ground, again to mingle with the dust which gave it life and supported it to maturity. All was calm, and beautiful, and touching. It was beauty smiling in the consciousness of being still lovely, yet sighing in the certainty that youth is past, that she has already gained the summit-hill of life, and is now descending into the vale; and sensible that, though her prospect is still fair to look upon, it is every day contracting towards a single point, beyond which is eternity. The white columns of smoke ascended straight upwards, undisturbed by a breath of wind, and presenting to the contemplative mind images, and symbols, of rural happiness here, of pure and spiritual bliss hereafter. But the feelings of Catalina were not in a state to enjoy the charms of the scene, or the associations it naturally inspired. She walked along in painful musings until she came to the quiet nook she sought, and, seating herself, soon became lost in the labyrinth of her own perplexities and sorrows.

The residence of Mr. Dennis Vancour was on a rising ground, which overlooked the extensive meadows spreading along the river, and commanded from

its porch a view of the mansion-house. Sybrandt saw Catalina depart; and the course she pursued, as well as the sympathetic feeling of his own heart, told him whither she was going. He turned pale and trembled, when he called to mind the circumstances of the preceding night; and, taking an opposite direction, hastened to the glen, determined to hide himself and watch over her safety. He arrived at the spot before her, and, concealing himself in the hollow of an immense oak that nodded on the brink of a precipice over which the waters plunged, waited what might follow. In a few moments Catalina made her appearance, and seated herself, as we have before described, in a recess among the rocks and trees, just where the bubbling basin at the foot of the cascade laved the mossy stones at her feet. There was something touching and sorrowful in her attitude and look, as she leaned on her hand, and watched the foaming torrent tumbling down the steep. Now is the time to tell her all, thought Sybrandt, and he forgot for a moment his great purpose in coming thither. Another moment brought it back to his remembrance. Here he remained quiet for somewhat more than half an hour, when he fancied he saw a pair of eyes glaring from the evergreens that skirted the crest of the cliff. He shrunk closer in his covert, and presently saw a head cautiously protruded beyond the thicket. It was that of Captain Pipe. He saw him look cautiously round in every direction; he saw him lay himself down and crawl on his belly, dragging his gun after him towards the edge of the precipice, that he might gain a full view of his victim below,—and he followed him noiselessly, creeping like a shadow rather than a sub-

stance. At length the Indian raised himself on his knee, cocked his unerring musket, and carried it to his cheek. In an instant it was snatched from his grasp, and in an instant more the Indian had grappled it again. It went off in the struggle, and Catalina, looking up, saw a sight that recalled all her tenderness and all her fears.

Almost on the verge of the precipice stood Sybrandt and the active, powerful, Indian, struggling for life, each straining every sinew to force the other off. Now one, now the other, seemed to have the advantage; now the back of one and anon of the other was towards her; and then both seemed to be quivering on the brink of eternity. In vain she attempted to cry out — her voice was lost in the agony of her fears. In vain she attempted to climb the steep — her limbs refused their office. Still, the deadly struggle continued, and she saw their quick pantings from the depth below. The gun had been thrown away in the contest, and now they wrestled limb to limb, heart to heart. More than once the Indian attempted to draw his knife, but Sybrandt gave him such full employment for both his hands, that he as often failed in his purpose. But the vigour of the youth was now waning fast, for he had of late become weakened by watching and anxiety. The Indian felt the trembling of his limbs, and heard with savage delight the shortness of his breathing. He redoubled his exertions; he grasped him tight in his arms, lifted him off his feet, and hurried him towards the verge of the cliff. Sybrandt made a desperate effort; he got one foot on the rock, and with a quick motion of the other tripped up the heels of the Indian. Both fell, with their

heads from the precipice, and their feet actually projecting over its edge. Sybrandt was uppermost, but this was rather a disadvantage, for the Indian, being determined to perish with him rather than fail in his purpose, was enabled by violent exertions to work himself on by degrees, until both were poised on the very brink. Another moment and all had been over, when fortunately Sybrandt perceived a small evergreen growing out of the rock, within his reach. He seized hold of it, and found it firmly rooted. With one hand he held it fast, with the other he suddenly pushed the Indian from under him, and he slipped over the precipice, still grasping the legs of the young man, who now clung to the shrub with both hands, making efforts to shake the Indian from his hold. But for some moments his exertions were vain, and only served to exhaust his remaining strength. Feeling himself gradually relaxing his gripe, and every instant growing fainter and fainter, he gathered himself to a last effort. Extricating one leg from the grasp of the Indian, he dashed his foot in his face with such convulsive violence, that he loosed his clutch, and fell among the pointed rocks which projected out of the pool below. Catalina heard the splashing of his body in the water, and not knowing who it was that had fallen, became insensible. Sybrandt raised himself slowly and with difficulty, and descended as fast as possible towards her. She waked in his arms, and by degrees came to a comprehension of all that had passed.

"Again!" at length said she, looking up tenderly, "Again! Yet you thanked God I was going away."

"Cannot you comprehend the reason *now*, dearest

Catalina? and will you not listen to what you refused to hear, yesterday?"

She glanced with horror at the pool:—"I thought I heard a groan. Perhaps the poor creature yet lives, and may be saved."

"Let him perish!" said the youth, indignantly. "O, if you only knew the days and nights of anxious misery he has occasioned me!"

"And me: yet I pity him."

"And wish he were alive?"

"If I were sure—if I could be made quite sure neither of us could possibly ever see him again. Go, cousin, and see if he is yet alive; but, take care!"

Sybrandt went, and dragged the body from the pool. It was dreadfully mangled, and apparently lifeless. Catalina shuddered as she cast one look at it.

"Let us go home," said she.

"Will you not listen to my explanation, now? You are going away from me to-morrow, and we may never meet again."

"No, dearest Sybrandt. I now see it all. You knew this wretched being had not left the country."

"I did; at least I suspected so from various circumstances."

"And you were every night on the watch, guarding me—*me*—who was accusing you of spending them in gaming, riot, and seduction—for such was the story I heard. O, blessed Heaven! what short-sighted creatures we are!" And she raised her tearful eye to his, as if to ask forgiveness. "Was it not so?"

"I confess it was."

"But why did you not tell me you feared the Indian was still lurking about the neighbourhood?"

“What! and poison all your moments of returning ease and happiness! No: I thought I could guard you from the danger, without making you wretched by knowing it.”

“And you left me to endure suspicions a thousand times more painful.”

“Recollect, dear Catalina, I could not anticipate your suspicions.”

“True; and your apprehensions for my safety prompted that ungallant wish,” said she, smiling languidly, — “‘Thank God, you are going.’”

“What else *could* have prompted it, dear love? And yet, much as I feared for you, I did not know half the danger.” He then related to her the incidents of the preceding night. She turned deadly pale, and remained silent for a few moments.

“I recollect I stood at the window more than four or five minutes, wondering what was the matter with the dogs. Once — twice — thrice: it is a heavy debt, and how can I repay it?”

“By never doubting me again, till I deceive you.”

“That can never be!” exclaimed she, fervently.

“And will you, can you love me, and trust me with your happiness, dearest Catalina?”

“I can — I will,” said she, solemnly; “and here, before the body of that dead wretch, who has expiated his intended crimes at your hands; in the presence of that good Being who has preserved me from his vengeance; by the life and all the hopes here and hereafter of the life you have three times, perhaps thrice three times, preserved, I promise to be yours, and to devote myself to your happiness whenever you shall ask it of me. I give myself to you by this kiss, such

as no man ever before received from me, and no other ever will again. I give myself away for ever!" And she kissed his forehead with her balmy lips.

"Blessed, for ever blessed, be this day and this hour!" cried Sybrandt, as he folded her in his arms. "I cannot thank you, dearest, but I am happy!" And he leaned his head on her shoulder, overpowered by the varying emotions and exertions of the past and present.

"You are hurt!" screamed Catalina.

"I am only faint with joy;"—and his head declined on her throbbing bosom. A dreadful shriek from Catalina roused him, and he saw the ghastly Indian close upon him, covered with blood, with arm raised, and knife in hand. Before he could move to defend himself the stroke was made. The knife entered his breast, and he staggered backwards, but did not fall. In a moment he rallied himself, and, evading a second stab, closed with the now exhausted and dying wretch, whom he dashed to the ground with furious indignation. The agony of death came upon the savage, but did not quench his ruling passion of revenge. With convulsive fury he repeatedly buried his knife up to the hilt in the earth, and his last breath expired in a blow.

Poor Catalina, whose mind and body had given way under the terrible vicissitudes of the day, during this momentary struggle sat wringing her hands, almost unconsciously repeating, "Once—twice—thrice—four times—and then his own! What a dear, dear purchase for a poor girl!"

Sybrandt went to her and said, "Fear nothing, he is dead."

“What? Sybrandt! Well, no matter. I shall be dead too, soon. The Indian will kill me now my preserver is gone.”

“Revive, dear love; it is the Indian that is dead: he will never trouble you again.”

“I cannot believe it,” said she, recovering a little; “I saw the knife enter your bosom, yet you do not bleed. I am sure you must be wounded. Is there no blood?”

Sybrandt opened his clothes to assure her, and then, for the first time, comprehended the cause of his escaping unhurt. The point of the Indian’s knife had left its print in the centre of the ducat which Catalina had given him when he went on his trading voyage, and a piece of it remained sticking there.

“See, Catalina,” said he, “you have saved my life, and we are now even. Do you take back the gift you just now made me?”

“’Twas Heaven’s own doing,” she replied; then, casting her eyes on the body of the Indian, she asked, with a shudder: “Is he dead; are you certain he is dead?”

Sybrandt answered in the affirmative, and Catalina continued:—

“Then, let us quit this miserable being, and, I was going to say, miserable place, though I shall love it as long as I live, and—and you love me,” whispered she, soft as the zephyr among the leaves.

“That will be for ever!” cried Sybrandt, and they bent their way towards the mansion-house.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A SEPARATION INSTEAD OF A UNION.

THE effect of the story which Catalina had to tell, in explanation of her long absence, may easily be imagined. Thanks and blessings were poured out from the lips of the good parents. The old gentleman called the daughter and the nephew into his presence, and, placing her hand in his, solemnly and affectionately blessed them both as his dear children. "You have thrice saved her life; may she prove a blessing to yours."

"Damn it," said little Ariel — "damn it, Sybrandt, who would have thought it! But come, I want you to go look at old Frelinghuysen's ox. He is grown as big as an elephant."

"It was not for nothing," thought the silent Dennis — "it was not for nothing he studied those old Greeks and Romans. I wish Dominie Stettinius were here to be told of this:" and the worthy man felt proud of his adopted son.

And now it became necessary to settle the question whether the visit to New York should be paid or not paid. All things were prepared, the vessel was ready, and the lady-cousin in the capital apprized of her invitation having been accepted. The colonel thought they had better send an apology, and get off as well as they could. Catalina — I confess it with the candour becoming my profession — Catalina fluttered

between her love and her desire of novelty. What woman could ever yet resist the temptations of travelling and seeing the world? She, however, dutifully left the decision to her parents. Madam Vancour was a woman, a very excellent woman — yet she was a woman. She did not exactly oppose the union of the cousins, but her heart was not in it. Ambition was too strong for gratitude. Like almost all the American women of that and indeed every succeeding age, she had imbibed, from her earliest years, a silly admiration of every thing foreign — foreign horses, foreign dogs, foreign men, and, especially, foreign officers. Every thing provincial, as it was called, she considered as bearing the brand of inferiority in its forehead. She had, moreover, long cherished a latent ambition to see Catalina wedded to one of his majesty's little officials, who assumed vast consequence at that time — if possible, to somebody who tacked honourable to his name, and bore the arms of some one of the illustrious houses who figured in the court-calendar, in the midst of griffins, sphinxes, lions, unicorns, vultures, and naked savages with clubs — fit emblems of the rude plunderers who first adopted these apt distinctions. The good lady, hardly unconscious of her motives, almost hoped that Catalina would forget her rustic swain in the gay scenes and various sights of the metropolis, and conquer and be conquered by some brilliant aide-de-camp, perhaps a baronet, with bloody hand for his crest. Accordingly, it was settled the start should take place the next day, as was originally contemplated.

Sybrandt yielded with an aching heart and a bad grace to what he could not prevent. The busy fiends

and phantoms that beset his earlier days rose up to his imagination, and flapped their wings, and whispered gloomy anticipations. She would have gay admirers, for she was an heiress and a beauty. She would be distant from her parents, her home, her fire-side, and from all those early associations with objects of nature, which serve as anchors by which the heart rides steadily in all the vicissitudes of wind and tide, and calm and tempest. "And then, the cursed red-coats," whispered one malignant demon, with a diabolical grin; "if she resists them, and the fashion, and the example of every female, young and old, married and single, she must be more than woman." Such gloomy, irritating, peevish thoughts crowded on his heart the next day, as he accompanied Catalina to the vessel which was to bear her away; but his pride buried them deep in his bosom.

"I shall return with the birds, in the Spring," said she, observing his dead silence. "You must be happy, but you must not forget me." And she placed her snowy hand in his. Sybrandt could scarcely feel it, 'twas so soft.

"Those who are left behind at home never forget," said the youth. "All that I see, and all that I hear, is the same to-day, to-morrow, and the next, and the next day. How can I change?"

"You think, then, there is more danger that *I* should change," said Catalina, with a tender smile.

"Such miracles *have* come to pass," replied he, answering her smile with one of melancholy.

"Sybrandt," said she, with solemn emphasis, "look: the river out of which you dragged me when I was drowning rolls by the city whither I am now going.

I shall see it every day from my window. The sun shines there by day, that yesterday saw you preserve me from the murderer; and the stars that witnessed your nightly watchings for my safety stand in the firmament there as well as here. The same air, the same light, the same nature, and the same God, the same memory, the same heart, will be with me wherever I go. Be just to me, dear Sybrandt; I cannot, if I would, forget you!"

Jealousy fled before this appeal, and Sybrandt became re-assured. A silent pressure of hands conveyed their last farewell tenderness, and in a few minutes he was seen standing alone on a green projecting point of the river, watching the vessel as it glided swiftly out of sight. When it was no longer visible, he turned himself towards home, and the world seemed to him suddenly changed into a void.

THE DUTCHMAN'S FIRESIDE.

PART II.





THE DUTCHMAN'S FIRESIDE.

CHAPTER I.

A LONG VOYAGE!

MUCH has been sung and written of the charms of the glorious Hudson—its smiling villages, its noble cities, its magnificent banks, and its majestic waters. The inimitable Knickerbocker, the graphic Cooper, and a thousand less celebrated writers and tourists have delighted to luxuriate in descriptions of its rich fields, its flowery meadows, whispering groves, and cloud-capped mountains, until its name is become synonymous with all the beautiful and sublime of nature. Associated as are these beauties with our earliest recollections, and nearest, dearest friends—entwined as they inseparably are with memorials of the past and anticipations of the future, we too would offer our humble tribute. But the theme has been exhausted by hands that snatched the pencil from Nature herself, and nothing is left for us but to expend our emotions in silent musings.

Catalina, accompanied by her father, embarked on board of the good sloop *Watervliet*, whereof was commander Captain Baltus Van Slingerland, a most

experienced, deliberative, and circumspective skipper. This vessel was noted for making quick passages, wherein she excelled the much-vaunted Liverpool packets; seldom being more than three weeks in going from Albany to New York, unless when she chanced to run on the flats, for which, like her worthy owners, she seemed to have an instinctive preference. Captain Baltus was a navigator of great sagacity and courage, having been the first man that ever undertook the dangerous voyage between the two cities without asking the prayers of the church and making his will. Moreover, he was so cautious in all his proceedings that he took nothing for granted, and would never be convinced that his vessel was near a shoal or a sand-bank until she was high and dry aground. When properly certified by ocular demonstration, he became perfectly satisfied, and set himself to smoking till it pleased the waters to rise and float him off again. His patience under an accident of this kind was exemplary; his pipe was his consolation — more effectual than all the precepts of philosophy.

It was a fine autumnal morning, calm, still, clear, and beautiful. The forests, as they nodded or slept quietly on the borders of the pure river, reflected upon its bosom a varied carpet, adorned with every shade of every colour. The bright yellow poplar, the still brighter scarlet maple, the dark-brown oak, and the yet more sombre evergreen pine and hemlock, together with a thousand various trees and shrubs, of a thousand varied tints, all mingled in one rich, inexpressibly rich garment, with which nature seemed desirous of hiding her faded beauties and approaching decay. The vessel glided slowly with the current,

now and then assisted by a little breeze, that for a moment rippled the surface and filled the sails, and then died away again. In this manner they approached the Overslaugh, a place infamous in all past time for its narrow, crooked channel, and the sand-banks with which it is infested. The vigilant Van Slingerland, in view of possible contingencies, replenished his pipe and inserted it in the button-holes of his Dutch pea-jacket, to be ready on an emergency.

"Boss," said the ebony Palinurus, who presided over the destinies of the good sloop Watervliet — "boss, don't you tink I'd better put about; I tink we're close to the Overslaugh, now."

Captain Baltus very leisurely walked to the bow of the vessel, and, after looking about a little, replied, "A leetle funder, a leetle funder, Brom; no occasion to pe in zuch a hurry pefore you are zure of a ting."

Brom kept on his course, grumbling a little in an undertone, until the sloop came to a sudden stop. The captain then bestirred himself to let go the anchor.

"No fear, boss, she won't run away."

"Very well," quoth Captain Baltus, "I'm zatisfied now, perfectly zatisfied. We are certainly on de Overslaugh."

"As clear as mud," answered Brom. The captain then proceeded to light his pipe, and Brom followed his example. Every quarter of an hour a sloop would glide past in perfect safety, warned of the precise situation of the bar by the position of the Watervliet, and adding to the vexation of our travellers at being thus left behind. But Captain Baltus smoked away, now and then ejaculating, "Ay, ay, de more hashte de lesch shpeed; we shall see py and py."

As the tide ebbed, the vessel, which had grounded on the extremity of the sand-bank, gradually heeled on one side, until it was difficult to keep the deck, and Colonel Vancour suggested the propriety of going on shore until she righted again.

"Why, where's de uze, den," replied Captain Baltus, "of daking all tis drouble, boss? We shall pe off in dwo or dree tays at most. It will pe vull-moon tay after do-morrow."

"Two or three days!" exclaimed the colonel. "If I thought so, I would go home and wait for you."

"Why, where's de uze den of daking zo much drouble, golonel? You'd only have to gome pack again."

"But, why don't you lighten your vessel, or carry out an anchor? She seems just on the edge of the bank, almost ready to slide into the deep water."

"Why, where's de uze of daking zo much drouble, den? She'll get off herzelf one of deze days, golonel. You are well off here; notting to do, and de young woman dare can knid you a bair of stogings to bass de dime."

"But she can't knit stockings," said the colonel, smiling.

"Not knid stogings! Py main zoul den what is zhe goot vor? Den zhe must zmoke a bipe; dat is de next pest way of bassing de dime."

"But she don't smoke either, captain."

"Not zmoke, nor knid stogings? Christus! where was zhe prought ub den? I would n't have her vor my wife iv zhe had a whole zloop vor her vortune. I don't know what zhe gan do to bass de dime dill next vull-moon, put go to zleep; dat is de next pest ding to knidding and zmoking."

Catalina was highly amused at Captain Baltus's enumeration of the sum-total of her resources for passing the time. Fortunately, however, the next rising of the tide floated them off, and the vessel proceeded gallantly on her way, with a fine north-west breeze, which carried her on with almost the speed of a steam-boat. In the course of a few miles they overtook and passed several sloops that had left the Watervliet aground on the Overslaugh.

"You zee, golonel," said Captain Baltus, complacently — "you zee — where's de uze of peing in a hurry, den? Dey have peen at anghor, and we have peen on a zand-pank. What's de difference, den, golonel?"

"But it is easier to get up an anchor, captain, than to get off a sand-bank."

"Well, zubbose it is; if a man is not in a hurry, what den?" replied Captain Baltus.

At the period of which we are writing, a large portion of the banks of the river, now gemmed with white villages and delightful retreats, was still in a state of nature. The little settlements were "few and far between," and some scattered Indians yet lingered in those abodes which were soon to pass away from them and their posterity for ever. The river alone was in the entire occupation of the white man; the shores were still, in many places, inhabited by remnants of the Indian tribes. But they were not the savages of the free wild woods; they had in some degree lost their habits of war and hunting, and seldom committed hostilities upon the whites, from an instinctive perception that they were now at their mercy.

Still, though the banks of the river were for the most part wild, they were not the less grand and beautiful; and Catalina, as she sat on the deck in the evening, when the landscape, bronzed with twilight, presented one unvaried appearance of lonely pomp and majestic repose, could not resist its holy influence. On the evening of the sixth day the vessel was becalmed in the heart of the Highlands, just opposite where West Point now rears its gray stone seminaries, consecrated to science, to patriotism, and glory. It was then a solitary rock, where the eagle made his abode, and from which a lonely Indian sometimes looked down on the vessels gliding past far below, and cursed them as the usurpers of his ancient domain.

The tide ran neither up nor down the river, and there was not a breath of air stirring. The dusky pilot proposed to Captain Baltus to let go the anchor, but the captain saw "no use in being in such a hurry." So the vessel lay still as a sleeping halcyon upon the unmoving mirror of the waters. Baltus drew forth his trusty pipe, and the negro pilot selected a soft plank on the forecastle, on which he, in a few minutes, found that blessed repose which is the prize of labour, and which a thousand times outweighs the suicide luxuries of the lazy glutton, whose sleep is the struggle, not the relaxation, of nature.

As the golden sun sunk behind the high mountains of the west, that other lesser glory of the heavens rose in full, round, silver radiance from out the fleecy foliage of the forest which crowned them on the east bank of the river. The vessel seemed embosomed in a little world of its own, with nothing visible but the

shimmering water, the half-seen twofold range of undulating mountains, one side all gloom, the other shining bright, and the blue heavens sparkling with ten thousand ever-during glories over head. Catalina wrapped herself in her cloak, and sat on the quarter-deck alone and abstracted, conscious of the scene and its enchantments only as they awakened those mysterious associations of thought and of feeling that establish the indissoluble union between the Creator and his works. Imagination, and memory, and hope, mingled in her bosom, alternately the sphere of heavenly aspirations and gentle worldly wishes, such as pure virgins who have given away their hearts may entertain without soiling the white ermine of their innocent affections. Gradually her thoughts concentrated themselves upon Sybrandt Westbrook; she recalled to mind those past incidents of her life which seemed intended by heaven to entwine their hearts in one being, and gradually worked herself up to the conviction, that they neither would nor could be separated. A flood of tenderness, hallowed by this infusion of a holy and mysterious sanction, rushed into her soul; she wished he were present at this apotheosis of all that was beautiful in nature, all that was susceptible in a woman's heart, that she might recline in his circling arms, lay her head on his bosom, murmur her passionate affection in his ear, and exchange her love for his, in one long kiss of melting rapture.

At this moment a wild shrill shriek or howl broke from the shore, echoed among the silent recesses of the mountains, and roused Catalina from her delicious revery. In about a minute it was repeated — and a third time, after a similar interval.

"Dat is de olt woman," said Captain Baltus, who was sitting on the hatchway smoking his pipe, something between sleeping and waking.

"What old woman?" asked Catalina.

"Why, de olt Inchan woman, what keeps apout de rock yust ashore — dare — don't you zee it glose under dat bine dree, dare?"

"What Indian woman? and what does she do there, shrieking?" said the young lady.

"What! tid you never hear dat zdory? and ton't you know it's no olt woman after all — put a ghost?"

"A ghost!"

"Ay — yes — a spook. I saw it one night when I cot ashore on de vlats yust apove de rog; ant you may tepent I was in a great hurry den for once in my life, I gan dell you. It looked like de very old Tuyvel, ztinting on de rog, and whetting a great jack-knife, as dey zay."

"Who say?" asked Catalina.

"Why, my fader ant grandfader — who are bote teat, for dat matter; but dey tolt me de zdory pefore dey tiet. We zhall have zixteen rainy Zuntays, one after de oder, and den it will glear up wid a gread znow-zdorm."

"Yes?"

"Yez; as zure as you zid dare. It always habbens after dat olt woman zhows herself, and sgreams zo, like de very Tuyvel."

"Do you know the story?" asked Colonel Vancour, whose attention had been arrested by the conversation.

"Know it? Why, to be zure I to, golonel. I have heart it a hundred dimes from my fader and grand-

fader. He was de firzt man dat zailed in a zloop all de way from Albany to New York."

"We can't have higher authority. Come, captain—I see your pipe is just filled—tell us the story, and then I will go to sleep."

The worthy skipper said he was no great hand at telling a story; but he would try, if they would promise not to hurry him; and accordingly began:

"Onze tere was an olt woman—Tuyvel! dare zhe is again!" exclaimed Baltus, as a long quaver echoed from the shore.

"Well, well—never mind her; go on."

"Onze tere was an olt woman—" Here another quaver, apparently from the mast-head, stopped Baltus again, and made Catalina start.

"Tuyvel!" cried Baltus; "put if I ton't pelieve zhe is goming apoard of us!"

"Well—never mind," said the colonel again; "she wants to hear whether you do her full justice, I suppose. Go on, captain."

"Onze tere was an olt woman," he began, almost in a whisper; when he was again interrupted by the black pilot, who came aft with the light, and asked Baltus whether it would not be better to haul down the sails, as he saw some appearance of wind towards the north-east, where the clouds had now obscured the moon entirely. "'Ton't pe in zuch a hurry, Brom," quoth the skipper; "dime enough when de wind gomes."

"Onze tere was an olt woman—" At that moment Brom's light was suddenly extinguished, and Baltus received a blow in the face that laid him sprawling on the quarter-deck, at the same instant

that a tremendous scream broke forth from some invisible being that seemed close at their ears. Baltus roared manfully, and Catalina was not a little frightened at these incomprehensible manœuvres of the old woman. The colonel, however, insisted that he should go on — bidding him get up and tell his story.

“Onze tere was an olt woman —” But the legend of honest Baltus, like Corporal Trim’s story of “a certain king of Bohemia,” seemed destined never to get beyond the first sentence. He was again interrupted by a strange mysterious scratching and fluttering, accompanied by a mighty cackling and confusion, in the chicken-coop, which the provident captain had stored with poultry for the benefit of the colonel and his daughter.

“Tuyvel! what’s dat?” cried Captain Baltus, in great consternation.

“O, it’s only the old woman robbing your hen-roost,” replied the colonel.

“Den I must loog to it,” said Baltus, and, mustering the courage of desperation, went to see what was the matter. In a few moments he returned, bringing with him a large owl, which had, from some freak or other, or perhaps attracted by the charms of Baltus’s poultry, first lighted on the mast, and then, either seduced or confused by Brom’s light, darted from thence into the capacious platter-face of the worthy skipper, as before stated.

“Here is de tuyvel!” exclaimed Baltus.

“And the old woman,” said the colonel, laughing; “But come, captain, I am more anxious than ever to hear the rest of the story.”

“Onze tere was an olt woman —” a hollow murmur among the mountains again suddenly interrupted him. “There is the old woman again,” said the colonel. “’Tis de olt Tuyvel!” said Baltus, starting up and calling all hands to let go the halyards. But, before this could be accomplished, one of those sudden squalls, so common in the highlands in autumn, struck the vessel and threw her almost on her beam ends. The violence of the motion carried Colonel Vancour and Catalina with it, and had they not been arrested by the railings of the quarter-deck, they must inevitably have gone overboard. The Watervliet was, however, an honest Dutch vessel, of a most convenient breadth of beam, and it was no easy matter to capsize her entirely. For a minute or two she lay quivering and struggling with the fury of the squall that roared among the mountains and whistled through the shrouds, until, acquiring a little headway, she slowly luffed up in the wind, righted, and flapped her sails in defiance. The next minute all was calm again. The cloud passed over, the moon shone bright, and the waters slept as if they had never been disturbed. Whereupon Captain Baltus, like a prudent skipper as he was, ordered all sail to be lowered, and the anchor to be let go, sagely observing, that it was “high time to look out for squalls.”

“Such an accident at sea would have been rather serious,” observed the colonel.

“I ton’t know what you dink, golonel,” said Baltus, “put, in my obinion, id ton’t make much odts wedder a man is trownnet in te zea or in a river.” The colonel could not well gainsay this, and soon after retired with his daughter to the cabin.

Bright and early the next morning, Captain Baltus, having looked round in every direction, east, west, north, and south, to see if there were any squalls brewing, and perceiving not a cloud in the sky, cautiously ordered half the jib and main-sail to be hoisted, to catch the little land-breeze that just rippled the surface of the river. In a few hours they emerged from the pass at the foot of the great Donderberg, and slowly opened upon that beautiful amphitheatre into which nature has thrown all her treasures and all her beauties. Nothing material occurred during the rest of the passage. True it is that Skipper Baltus ran the good sloop Watervliet two or three times upon the oyster-banks of the since renowned Tappan Bay; but this was so common a circumstance, that it scarcely deserved commemoration, nor would I have recorded it here but for the apprehension that its omission might at a future period, peradventure, seduce some industrious scribe to write an entirely new history of these adventures, solely to rescue such an important matter from oblivion. Suffice it to say, that at the expiration of ten days from the commencement of the voyage, the good sloop Watervliet arrived safe at Coenties Slip, where all the Albany sloops congregated at that time. This extraordinary passage was much talked of in both cities, and finally found its way into The Weekly News-Letter, then the only paper published in the whole new world, as may be seen by a copy now, or lately, in the possession of the worthy Mr. Dustan, of the Narrows. It is further recorded, that some of the vessels which passed the Watervliet as she lay aground on the Overslaugh, did not arrive till nearly a fortnight after

her; owing, as Captain Baltus observed, "to der peing in zuch a hurry." After so famous an exploit the Watervliet had always a full freight, and as many passengers as she could accommodate; so that, in good time, this adventurous navigator gave up following the water, and built himself a fine brick house, with the gable end to the street, and the edges of the roof projecting like the teeth of a saw, where he sat on his *stoop* and smoked his pipe, time out of mind.

CHAPTER II.

WHICH MAY BE SKIPPED OVER BY THE GENTLE READER, AS IT CONTAINS NOT A SINGLE BLOODY ADVENTURE.

CATALINA was received with a welcome kindness by Mrs. Aubineau, the lady with whom she had been invited to spend the winter, and who appeared struck with the improvement in her person since she left boarding-school some eighteen months before. Our heroine was glad to see Mrs. Aubineau again, having a vivid recollection of her pleasing manners and matronly kindness.

The husband of this lady was a son of one of the Huguenots driven by the bigotry or policy of Louis the Fourteenth to this land of liberty — liberty of action, of speech, and of conscience. These emigrants constituted a portion of the best-educated, most enlightened, polite, and wealthy of the early inhabitants of New York. They laid the foundation of families which still exist in good reputation, and from some of them have descended men who are for ever associated with the history of our country. The father of Mr. Aubineau had occupied a dignified situation under the Dutch government while it held possession of New York; but lost it when the province was assigned to the Duke of York, whose hungry retainers were portioned off in the new world, there not being loaves and fishes enough in the old to satisfy them all. Both father and son cherished some little resentment

on this score; and, when a legislative body was established, one or other being generally a member, they never failed to be found voting and acting with the popular side, in opposition to the governor. They joined the old Dutch party in all their measures, which were generally favourable to the rights of the colony, and attained to great consideration and respect among them.

Notwithstanding his politics, Mr. Aubineau the younger married a handsome English woman; not a descendant merely of English parents, but a real native, born and educated in London. Her father came over with an appointment, being a younger brother, with a younger brother's portion, which generally consists in the family influence employed on all occasions in quartering the junior branches upon the public. The great use of colonies is to provide for these cases. What this appointment was I do not recollect; but, whatever it was, it enabled Mr. Majoribanks to live in style, and carry his head high above the unlucky beings who furnished the means, and whose destiny it had been to be born on the wrong side of the Atlantic Ocean, where it is well known that every thing, from men down to dandies, degenerates. To be born at *home*, as the phrase then was, operated as a sort of patent of nobility, and desperate was the ambition of the rich young citizens, and still more desperate that of the city heiresses and their mothers, to unite their fate and fortunes with a genuine exotic. Many a soldier of fortune, "who spent half a crown out of sixpence a day," was thus provided for; and not a few female adventurers gained excellent establishments, over which they were noted for exercising absolute

dominion. For a provincial husband to contradict a wife from the mother country was held equivalent to the enormity of a provincial legislature's refusing its assent to a rescript of his majesty's puissant governor. It smacked of flat rebellion.

Mr. Aubineau was, however, tolerably fortunate in his choice. His wife always contradicted him aside when in public, and issued her commands in a whisper. She never got angry with him, and only laughed and took her own way whenever he found fault; or, what was still more discreet, took no notice of his ill-humour, and did just as she pleased. She was fond of gayety, dress, and equipage, and particularly fond of flirting with the officers attached to the governor's family and establishment. These gentlemen, having nothing to do, and no inclination to marry, except they were well paid for it, naturally selected the married ladies as objects for their devoirs; very properly concluding, that, whatever might be the case with the ladies, there could be no breach of promise of marriage on their part, and, consequently, no dishonour being as particular as the lady pleased. As to the provincial husbands, they were out of the question.

Among the most prominent of the foibles of Mrs. Aubineau was an idea at that time very prevalent among both English and American women. This was an undisguised and confirmed conviction, that the whole universe was a nest of barbarians, compared with Old England, and that there was as much moral and physical difference between being born there and here, as there was space between the two countries. Though not much of the blue-stockings,

that sisterhood not having made its appearance as a distinct class in those days, like all good English folks she could ring the changes on Shakspeare and Milton, and Bacon and Locke, those four great names on which English poetry, philosophy, and metaphysics, seem entirely to depend for their renown; and which form a standard to which every blockhead more or less pretends to have assimilated his mind, as if the reflected rays of their glory had illuminated in some degree the midnight darkness of his own intellect. This truly John Bull notion she considered so settled and established beyond all reasonable question, that she always spoke of it with an amusing simplicity, arising from a perfect confidence in an undisputed point, upon which all mankind, except her husband, agreed with as much unanimity as that the sun shone in a clear day. In regard to the solitary exception aforesaid, Mrs. Aubineau settled that in her mind, by referring it to that indefinable matrimonial sympathy which impels so many men to agree with every other woman when she is wrong, and oppose their wives whenever they are right. The connexion between this lady and our heroine originated in a marriage between the elder Aubineau and a sister of Colonel Vancour. Into the hands of Mrs. Aubineau the colonel consigned his daughter for the winter, at the same time communicating her engagement with Sybrandt Westbrook, at which she laughed not a little in her sleeve. She had already a plan in her head for establishing her rich and beautiful guest in a far more splendid sphere, as she was pleased to imagine. At the end of eight or ten days, Colonel Vancour took his departure for home in the good sloop Watervliet,

which had made vast despatch in unlading and lading, on account of the lateness of the season.

Catalina was connected in different ways with almost all the really respectable and wealthy inhabitants of New York and its vicinity; such as, the Philippses, the Stuyvesants, the Van Cortlandts, the Beekmans, Bayards, Delanceys, Gouverneurs, Van Hornes, Rapalyes, Rutgers, Waltons, and a score of others. Of course she could be in no want of visitors or invitations, and there was every prospect of a gay winter. But all these good folks were only secondary in the estimation of Mrs. Aubineau, when compared with — not his majesty's governor and his family, for they were out of the range of mortal comparison — but with the families of his majesty's chief-justice, his majesty's attorney-general and solicitor-general, his majesty's collector of the customs, and, indeed, with the families of any of his majesty's petty officers, however insignificant. These formed the focus of high life in the ancient city of New York, and nothing upon the face of the earth was more ridiculous in the eyes of a discreet observer than the pretensions of this little knot of dependants over the truly dignified independence of the great body of the wealthy inhabitants, except, perhaps, the docility with which these latter submitted to the usurpation.

CHAPTER III.

A KNIGHT AND AN HONOURABLE. THE READER IS DESIRED TO MAKE HIS BEST BOW.

THE morning after Catalina's arrival, she received the visits of several officers, two of whom had the honour of being aides to his Excellency the Governor and Commander-in-chief. They therefore merit a particular introduction. "Gentle Reader, this is Sir Thicknesse Throgmorton; and this is the Honourable Barry Gilfillan, of an ancient and noble Irish family, somewhat poor, but very honest, having suffered divers forfeitures for its loyalty to the Stuarts, — that worthless race, whose persevering efforts to regain a crown they had justly forfeited by their tyranny drew after them the ruin of thousands of generous and devoted victims. Sir Thicknesse and Colonel Gilfillan, this is the Gentle Reader, a beautiful, accomplished lady, of great taste, as all our female readers are, thank Heaven!"

Sir Thicknesse Throgmorton was what is now generally styled a "real John Bull," a being combining more of the elements of the ludicrous than perhaps any other extant. Stiff as buckram, and awkward as an ill-contrived automaton; silent, stupid, and ill-mannered, yet at the same time full of pretensions to a certain deference, due from others only in exchange for courtesy and good-breeding. Ignorant of his own country from incapacity to learn, and

of the rest of the world from a certain contemptuous stolidity, he exalted the one and depreciated the other without knowing exactly why, except that—that it certainly was so, and there was an end to the matter. His bow was an outrage upon both nature and inclination, except when he bent to the lady of the governor, or the governor himself; and his dancing, the essence of solemn stupidity, aiming at a stately non-chalance. Nothing called forth his lofty indignation more than being spoken to by an inferior in rank, dress, or station. This indignation was manifested by a most laughable jumble of insurmountable clumsiness with affected dignity and would-be aristocratic breeding. There was nothing he so much valued himself upon as the air noble. Independently of the indifference to his personal, hereditary, and official dignity, evinced in an abrupt address from an inferior, Sir Thicknesse had another special cause for disliking to be spoken to by strangers. The fact is, he was so long in collecting the materials of an answer to the most common observation, that he seldom forgave a person for putting him to the trouble. He had a most rare, and, at that time, original, style of making the agreeable, which is now however pretty general among high-bred persons. He placed himself directly opposite the lady, straddling like a gigantic pair of brass tongs, to collect his ideas into one great explosion—such, for instance, as, “Don’t you find it rather warm, *Mawm*?” Perfectly satisfied with this mighty effort, the knight would strut off in triumph, to repose himself for the rest of the evening under the shade of his laurels. Added to this, he was a grumbling, ill-tempered, dissatisfied being, full of assumption on

the score of his personal accomplishments and the interest of his connections. There is nothing in fact so grand in the view of "a real John Bull" as possessing a family influence, which renders personal merit and services quite superfluous.

With regard to the person of Sir Thicknesse, it was admirably contrived to set off his exemplary awkwardness to the best advantage. It was a perfect caricature of dignified clumsiness. His limbs struck you as being too large for his body, until you studied the latter, when it seemed perfectly clear that the body was too large for the limbs. Taken by itself, every feature of his face was unsymmetrical; but examine them in connexion as a whole, and there was an harmonious combination of unfinished magnitude, that constituted a true and just proportion of disproportions. His eyes sent forth a leaden lustre; his nose was equally compounded of the pug and the bottle; his lips would have been too large for his mouth, had not his mouth been large enough to harmonize with them; and his cheeks expanded into sufficient amplitude to accommodate the rest of his face without any of the features being crowded two in a room, which every body knows is the abomination of every "real John Bull" in existence. Sir Thicknesse was of an ancient and honourable family, distinguished in the annals of England. One of his ancestors had committed an assassination in the very precincts of the court, and, being obliged to fly in the disguise of a peasant in order the more effectually to escape detection, was overtaken by the king's poursuivant, while sawing wood with one of his companions in a forest. His attendant faltering on the appearance of the

officer, for a moment stopped sawing, when the other exclaimed significantly, "Thorough"—or, "Through"—tradition is doubtful which. The attendant took the hint, continued his work, and the *poursuivant* passed them without suspicion. In memory of this great exploit, the illustrious fugitive from justice adopted this phrase as the motto of his coat of arms; and it descended to his posterity. Another of his illustrious ancestors was distinguished in the wars of York and Lancaster for his inflexible loyalty, being always a most stanch supporter of the king *de facto*, and holding kings *de jure* in great contempt. A third, and the greatest of all the family of Sir Thicknesse, was an illegitimate descendant of a theatrical strumpet and a scoundrel king, who demonstrated the force of blood by afterward marrying an actress of precisely the same stamp as her from whom he sprung. No wonder Sir Thicknesse was proud of his family.

But, great as his progenitors were, they could not hold a candle to those of Colonel Barry Fitzgerald Macartney Gilfillan, a genuine Milesian, whose ancestors had been kings of Connaught, princes of Breffny, and lords of Ballyshannon, Ballynamora, Ballynahinch, Ballygruddrey, Ballyknockamora, and several lordships besides. Gilfillan was an Irish Bull, a perfect contrast to an English Bull. He was all life, love, gallantry, whim, wit, humour, and hyperbole. His animal spirits were to him as the wings of a bird, on which he mounted into the regions of imagination and folly. They flew away with him ten times an hour. He learned every thing so fast that he knew nothing perfectly; and such was the impetuosity of his conceptions, that half the time they came forth

wrong end foremost. His ignorance of a subject never for a moment prevented him from dashing right into it, or stopped the torrent of his words, which resembled a stream swelled by the rains, being excessively noisy and not very clear. His ideas, in truth, seemed always turning somersets over the heads of each other, and for the most part presented that precise rhetorical arrangement which is indicated by the phrase, "putting the cart before the horse." He never pleaded guilty to ignorance of any thing, nor was ever known to stop a moment to get hold of the right end of an idea,—maintaining with a humorous obstinacy, that, as he always came to the right end at last, it was of no consequence where he began.

Nature had given to Colonel Gilfillan a more than usual share of the truly Irish propensity to falling in love extempore. His heart was quite as hot as his head, and between the two there was a perfect volcano. He was always under high steam pressure. He once acknowledged, or rather boasted—for he never confessed any thing—that he had fallen in love at the Curragh of Kildare with six ladies in one day, and was refused by them all in less than twenty-four hours afterward. "But, faith!" added he, "I killed two horses riding about the country after them; and that was some comfort." "Comfort!" said a friend: "how do you make that out, Gilfillan?" "Why, wasn't it a proof I didn't stand shilly-shally, waiting my own consent any more than that of the ladies, my dear?" It is scarcely necessary to add, that he was generous, uncalculating, brave, and a man of his word, except in love affairs, and sometimes in affairs of business,

when he occasionally lost at play the money he had promised to a tradesman. His person exhibited a rich redundancy of manly beauty, glorious with youth, health, and vigour; he sang charmingly; played the fiddle so as to bring tears into your eyes; danced, laughed, chatted, blundered, gallanted, flattered, and made love, with a graceful confidence and fearless audacity that caused him to be a great favourite with and rather a dangerous companion for women of warm imaginations and mere ordinary refinement of manners and feelings. Like most men of his profession, his ideas on certain subjects were of the latitudinarian order. Gilfillan swore he was a man of as much honour as ever wore a uniform. He would not pick a pocket; but, as for picking a lady's white bosom of a sweet little heart—let him alone for that. A fair exchange was no robbery, all the world over; and he always left his own with them, if there were twenty. When his brother officers laughed at him for having so many hearts, "Och, my dears!" would he reply, "do you talk about having but one heart? A man with only one heart in his body is like a poor devil with only a shilling in his pocket—he is afraid to part with it, and so starves himself just for fear of starving."

CHAPTER IV.

A REIGNING BELLE.

THIS combustible gentleman fell in love with Catalina, instantler — and never man had a better excuse; for she was now in the prime of womanhood, and lovely as the fairest creations of painting and poetry. Her eyes, her lips, her cheeks, her nose, her forehead, and her chin, were all cast in the happy mould of symmetry; and the combination produced an expression of sensibility, intellect, and virtue, that struck every one at first sight. Her fair white neck; her harmonious, graceful shoulders; the confines of that region on which the eye and the imagination delight to linger as the chosen spot where grace and beauty revel as on a bed of down; the little, finished, tell-tale foot; and the graceful lines that gave the contour of her full, round figure; — all and each of them bore silent testimony to the perfection sacred to one alone.

That Colonel Gilfillan should fall headlong in love at the first sight of such an object, was just as natural, not to say inevitable, as the explosion of a barrel of gunpowder on the application of a firebrand. I will not affirm that there was a spark of interest mingled with his fires, but it may be safely laid down as a maxim founded in human nature, that the most disinterested lover has no very great objection to a competent estate in connexion with his mistress. Gilfillan

made downright love to Catalina the tenth time he saw her; and at the eleventh interview offered her his hand and fortune, at the same time laying his sword at her feet, in which he confessed the latter entirely consisted. He did this, however, in a style so wild and overstrained, and with so odd a mixture of pathos and levity, jest and earnest, that the young lady laughed at it as rodomontade. She gradually became accustomed to his extravagance, and amused with his good-humoured eccentricities. In the mean time she mixed continually in the winter gayeties, and became the toast of the season.

Now it was that the spirit moved Sir ~~Thicknesse Throgmorton~~ to gather himself together and honour Catalina with his notice. It will ever be found that the dullest fellows are seen hovering about the most brilliant objects, just as the bugs and moths, and other imps of the night, hie them to bask in the splendours of the lighted candle. Besides this general propensity, Sir Thicknesse was impelled by another and more particular incitement. He was especially envious of Gilfillan, who was perpetually throwing his accomplishments into the shade, and whose spirit, brilliancy, and good-nature made the dullness and stultified pride of the other appear still more ungracious.

The first demonstration of his devotion to our heroine which Sir Thicknesse indulged in was one night actually stooping to pick up her fan, at a party at his puissant excellency the governor's. Whereupon Madam Van Borsum, Madam Van Dam, Madam Twentyman, and twenty other madams, who had marriageable daughters, were thrown into a trepidation. What rendered this act of condescension the

more conspicuous, such was the rigidity of Sir Thicknesse's habits and costume, that he was obliged to go down on one knee in order to its performance. The young ladies tittered behind their fans, and Gilfillan swore it put him in mind of a wooden god offering incense to a beautiful young priestess, which sounded somewhat like a bull. When Sir Thicknesse had performed this successful feat of gallantry, he strutted away, and passed the rest of the evening in a corner, in stately isolation, justly conceiving that he had done enough for one night.

There was a certain feeling of self-complacency which was vastly conciliated by having his name connected with that of the reigning belle of the day, in the whispers of the young ladies and the tittle-tattle of their mothers. With all his absurd affectation of proud indifference, his vanity was highly excited by the association. He was always pretending the most sovereign contempt for the world and its opinions, while at the same time his very soul smarted under its censure or neglect. Of all the affectations of vanity, that of insensibility to the opinions of the world is the most irreconcilable with the feelings and actions of men, and the most easily detected by its inconsistencies. Sir Thicknesse followed up his first overt act of picking up the fan by other movements still more significant, until it came to pass that Madam Van Borsum, Madam Van Dam, Madam Twentyman, and the rest, came to a unanimous decision that it was all over with their daughters, and that Catalina would certainly, in good time, become Lady Throgmorton. Not one of them conceived it possible she could be so mad as to refuse a baronet, a governor's aide-de-camp,

and a man actually born in Old England. It is unnecessary to say that these worthy madams from this time took a decided distaste to our heroine, and treated her with extraordinary marks of attention.

Mrs. Aubineau soon, with the quick instinct of a *chaperon* having a young lady to establish, perceived the important conquests Catalina had achieved in so short a time. She accordingly forthwith fell to balancing accounts between the two suitors, for, as to poor Sybrandt, she looked upon that affair as a mere country arrangement, made to be broken on the first convenient opportunity. Engagements made in the country are never considered binding in town, all the world over. If Catalina, quoth Madam Aubineau in her secret cogitations, marries Gilfillan, she will be a countess in time, but then it's only an Irish title, and there is no estate to it I know. If she marries Sir Thicknesse, she will be a lady at once, wife to an English baronet — and lady is lady all the world over. Besides, he has an estate, and, though it is out at the elbows, a little of Catalina's fortune will make it whole again. The inevitable conclusion of Madam Aubineau was, to encourage Sir Thicknesse, and discountenance his rival.

But Gilfillan was an Irishman, and, as he affirmed, he could always tell the difference between the false and true Milesian, by the latter never being discouraged. "By my soul," would he say, "there's no such word in the old Irish tongue — its an English importation." To check such a man was out of the question. If Madam Aubineau looked coolly upon him, or failed in any of the customary attentions, he rallied her with such a triumphant good-humour, or received her slights

with such imperturbable negligence, that she found herself obliged to laugh herself friends with him, or to sit down in despair at the perfect impotence of her scheme of repression.

CHAPTER V.

MANŒUVRING.

THE busiest and at the same time the most injudicious of all schemers is a good lady over-anxious to make a match for a daughter, or a young spinster under her protection. Madam Aubineau did nothing but give parties at night, and her worthy husband had no rest until he gave parties by day, at which Sir Thicknesse was always seated next to Catalina at dinner, where he never neglected to observe upon the weather, and drink a glass of wine with her. There is no telling what these seductive attentions might have achieved in time, had not the genius of Gilfillan crossed the path of Sir Thicknesse. That enterprising Milesian, with singular skill and intrepidity, never omitted to gain a seat on the other side of our heroine, where his humour, vivacity, and gallantry seldom failed to obscure his rival, and throw him into utter oblivion. It was observed at these merry-makings, that Sir Thicknesse ate himself into still greater stupidity, while Gilfillan drank himself into such an effervescence of spirits, that Catalina became actually afraid of him. The prompt and sagacious matron very soon came to the conclusion that dinner-parties are the worst places in the world for match-making, at least with Englishmen and Irishmen.

Madam Aubineau accordingly essayed to circumvent Sir Thicknesse, by ensnaring him amid the allure-

ments of evening-parties. Catalina had a fine voice, and all the skill which could be attained in those miserable days, when all or nearly all the music of our western world was carolled in woods and fields, when not a single lady in all the land had a harp whereon to commit murder, and when there were but three old phthisicky spinets within the bills of mortality. Unfortunately for our heroine one of these appertained to Madam Aubineau's mansion, and night after night was poor Catalina condemned to torture this impracticable machine into something like groans and shrieks of harmony. Catalina was tired to death; and so was all the company. But everybody said "charming," and cried, "what a pretty tune," at the end of every execution. Sir Thicknesse beat time out of time, till he fell into a brown study or a nap, no one could tell which. Still worse than this; here too the star of Sir Thicknesse paled before the star of Gilfilan. The voice of the latter was so touching and pathetic, that it is said he could bring tears into your eyes by merely whimpering an Irish howl; and when he threw his whole ardent soul into an old Irish melody, such as Aileen Aroon, it is recorded that the hardest hearts were softened, and even tea-parties became silent. He taught Catalina some of these fine old airs, and, as they warbled them together, their very beings seemed for the time blended in one rich harmony; and then did the fortunes of Sir Thicknesse kick the beam higher than ever.

Madam Aubineau saw that the gods of eating and of music were both equally adverse to her desires. She therefore varied her plan once more, and introduced dancing at her parties. She summoned the

Orpheus and Amphion of the day, to wit — Curaçoa Dick, and Will, alias Ticklepitcher; than whom two greater fiddlers never drew bow in this western hemisphere. Not Billy, the fiddler of immortal memory, nor Bennett, nor any of those who now preside over the midnight, or rather morning, revels of the youthful fair of our city, who so many of them thus dance themselves into the other world — not one of these, nor all together, could match the matchless skill of the two above-mentioned. They lived in harmony, and died in harmony — as I verily believe; never having heard any thing to the contrary.

But alack and alas for Madam Aubineau! Here too the fates were hostile, and the genius of Old Ireland triumphed over that of Old England. Gilfillan danced like the feathered Mercury, and Sir Thicknesse like a bear. His face was of lead and his body of something still heavier. As to his legs, no one could ever invent a comparison, or suggest a material, adequate to giving a just idea of their specific gravity. Gilfillan came the nearest, when he affirmed they put him in mind, “of two old rusty twenty-four-pounders, planted half-way in the ground at the opposite corners of a street.” Besides, Sir Thicknesse was so long in gathering himself together and crossing the room to ask Catalina to dance, that Gilfillan, who delighted to thwart his rival, always was beforehand with him, and danced with her twice as often, to the complete discomfiture of Madam Aubineau.

The good lady then resorted to morning visits. She invited Sir Thicknesse, under various pretences, to call, and managed to leave Catalina alone with him. This was worse than all. Sir Thicknesse was

too stupid for a tête-à-tête conversation. People ascribed his silence to pride, but, take my word for it, it was sheer dulness — the want of something to say. This is what makes so many people affect pride. He would sit on the sofa, rapping his military boot with a rattan, and looking Catalina full in the face, till she was both annoyed and tired out of all patience. Once, we must do him the justice to say — once, he asked the young lady if she had been at the review. She answered in the negative, at which Sir Thicknesse, who had figured on the occasion in a newly-imported suit of regimentals, was so grievously affronted, that he pouted all the rest of the morning, and would not condescend to stare her out of countenance.

These gratifying visits were also frequently broken in upon by Gilfillan, who did not mind any of the usual polite denials which shrewdly indicate that one's company is not quite welcome. The truth is, he seldom gave himself the trouble to inquire who was at home, but whistled or hummed himself into the parlour without ceremony. If he found any one there, it was well; if not, he staid till some one came, or, if he grew tired, whistled himself out again. His company was always a relief to our heroine from the deadly monotony of Sir Thicknesse's silence, and of course she received him with smiles, which almost went to the imperturbable heart of his rival, who always slapped his boot the harder, and looked, if possible, still more grim on these occasions.

All this time Catalina had no idea of any serious attentions on the part of the two gentlemen. She did not feel sufficiently interested in either to make her very clear-sighted on the occasion; and, indeed, the

stupidity of the one, and the wild rodomontade of the other, made their intentions very obscure as well as questionable. But young ladies are sure to be let into these secrets by the kind interest which every-body takes in affairs with which they have no concern. I will not deny that she flirted a little with one of her admirers, and what was still more suspicious, laughed at the other; but, certain it is, she had not troubled her head in the business until she began to be congratulated on all hands upon the important conquests she had made. Nay, some of the old ladies affected to ask her, very significantly, when *it* was to be—whether the old folks had given their consent, and, especially, how master Sybrandt Westbrook was, and whether he did not mean to spend part of the winter in town.



CHAPTER VI.

IN WHICH THE READER WILL BE PUZZLED TO DISCOVER WHETHER THE GRAY MARE IS THE BETTER HORSE OR NOT.

OUR heroine was somewhat startled at these inquiries. Though beautiful as an angel, still she was mortal. The dissipations of a city life, the novelty of every thing around her, and more especially the incense every where administered to the sly lurking vanity which nestles somewhere in every human heart, had, by degrees, somewhat obscured the remembrance of Sybrandt. She frequently thought of him with affectionate gratitude, but this thought was so often interrupted by visitors, entertainments, and all the attractions of a life of pleasure, that by degrees it ceased to be the governing principle of her actions; and various little coquetries marked the effect of absence as well as the growth of worldly passions. During the winter season there was little intercourse between New York and Albany, and consequently the letters that were interchanged between her and Sybrandt were few and far between. It must be confessed too, that when opportunities did occur, Catalina sometimes had so much on her hands that she did not always avail herself of them.

"My dear," said Mr. Aubineau to his wife, one day that he had been asked by Mrs. Twentyman when Catalina was to be married,—"my dear, have you forgot that your friend Miss Vancour is engaged to be married to her cousin?"

"No, my dear," replied she; "I've not forgot it. I've not lost my memory yet, thank heaven."

"Well then, my dear, do you wish to make a fool of Sir Thicknesse Throgmorton?"

"No, my dear, I don't wish to make a fool of Sir Thicknesse Throgmorton."

"Then, perhaps you wish to make a fool of Catalina?"

"I don't understand you, my dear."

"Why, my dear, it seems to me that, knowing as you do the engagement of this young lady, the encouragement you give Sir Thicknesse in his attentions to her, when it is obvious they must be vain, is very well calculated to make a fool of him, in the common acceptation of the term."

"Pooh, Mr. Aubineau;—what is an engagement between two people without experience in the world, who fall in love in the country because they don't know what to do with themselves?"

"Why, Mrs. Aubineau, I should think an engagement made in the country exactly as binding as if it were made in the city."

"Pshaw! Mr. Aubineau, you talk nonsense. To miss such an establishment, and a title to boot! What do you say to that?"

"Why, I say that neither a title nor an establishment furnishes sufficient apology for acting dishonourably."

"Lord! Mr. Aubineau, how you talk!"

"This young lady is placed under our guardianship by her parents, who have sanctioned her engagement with her cousin; and we are, in some measure, responsible for her conduct. What will her father say?"

“Pooh! what signifies what he says!”

“And her mother?”

“Why, she’ll say we have done right to break off this foolish country engagement, and thank us for making her the mother of a lady.”

“I doubt it.”

“If she don’t, she is a most unnatural mother. Why, Madam Van Borsum, and Madam Van Dam, and Madam Twentyman, and all the other madams that have marriageable daughters, are ready to die of envy.”

“Well, let them die, if they will.”

“Let them die?—why, you inhuman man, are you not ashamed of yourself?—the poor souls!”

“But this is nothing to the purpose. It is not what others may think or say, but what we ought to do, that I wish to consult you about.”

“Well, my dear, I am willing to be consulted as much as you please; but, I tell you beforehand, all you can say will not alter my opinions or my conduct, my dear.”

“Oh, if that is the case, madam, I shall take my own course. I shall to-day write to invite Sybrandt Westbrook to come down and spend the rest of the winter with us. Let him take care of his own interests, since you won’t.”

“If you do, I tell you once for all, my dear, I won’t be civil to him.”

“Then I shall be particularly civil.”

“You will?”

“Yes.”

A monosyllable is always significant of cool determination; and this made Mrs. Aubineau start.

"There's no room for him in the house," said she, after a pause of consideration as to whether it was time to be angry.

"I shall have a bed made for him in my library."

"There's no room for a bed without removing the bookcases."

"Then I shall remove the bookcases."

"You will?"

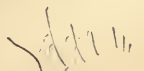
"Yes."

Another diabolical monosyllable! What woman in the shape of a wife could bear it?

"I'll tell you what, my dear—"

"You need not tell me any thing, my dear. I recollect you were pleased to observe just now that nothing I could say would alter your opinions or your conduct. I am just in the same humour. There is a government-messenger going to Albany to-morrow;— I shall write by him." So saying, Mr. Aubineau took his hat, and walked very deliberately to the Perpetual Club, an ancient and honourable institution which flourished at that time in the good city of New York, one of the fundamental principles of which was that there should always be a quorum of members present, day and night.

"What an obstinate mule!" exclaimed Mrs. Aubineau, when he was out of hearing. "A man that won't listen to reason is as bad—as bad—" as a woman that won't listen to reason, whispered conscience. Mrs. Aubineau was, upon the whole, a reasonable woman, and listened to her monitor until she thought better of the matter. She determined to be uncommonly civil to Sybrandt if he came, and to make herself amends by counteracting his interests



to the utmost of her power. That evening Mr. Aubineau informed Catalina he had written to invite Sybrandt. The news caused a rush of blood from her heart to her face; but whether it was a flush of pleasure, surprise, or apprehension, I cannot say. Whatever were her feelings, she uttered not a word, and the secret remained buried in her bosom.

CHAPTER VII.

THE RAPE OF THE PICTURE.

IN due time Sybrandt received the letter of Mr. Aubineau, and obtained from Mr. Dennis Vancour a slow unwilling assent to his acceptance of the invitation. Colonel Vancour also gave his approbation, and Madam did not oppose, though she had a great inclination to do so. She was a wife of the old regime — that is to say, an antediluvian wife, — for I have heard of none since the flood who, like her, acted on the principle that in matters where men's business was particularly concerned men should be left to judge for themselves. But she did not like the arrangement. I don't much approve disclosing the secrets of ladies, but, the truth was, there had been a sly correspondence going on for some time between her and Mrs. Aubineau, in which the project of making Madam the mother of a titled lady was communicated, and received with singular complacency. Probably there was not a mother in the whole wide circumference of this new world who could have resisted the temptation. The apple of Eve was nothing to it. The good Dame Vancour thought of little else by day and by night, — nay, she dreamed, three nights running, that she saw Catalina with a coronet, instead of a nightcap. However, she made no opposition to the visit of Sybrandt, trusting to the assurances contained in a letter from Mrs. Aubineau, (which came by the mes-

senger who brought the invitation), that she would take care nothing should grow out of Mr. Aubineau's impertinent interference.

The worthy Dennis was resolved that his adopted son should not disgrace him at the little court of the little puissant governor of New York. He got him two full suits, constructed by his own tailor, whom he considered the greatest hand at inexpressibles in the universe. Certain it is he took the greatest quantity of broadcloth, though he was never in his life suspected of cabbaging. The favourite colours of Dennis were snuff and drab, and accordingly these were ordered. The tailor was enjoined to be very particular in not making them too tight, as people were very apt to grow fat as they grew old; and Ariel had a glorious time of it. He went to Albany four times a week, to superintend the construction of Sybrandt's wardrobe, and hasten the completion of this arduous business. Thus stimulated, the tailor, who was called Master Goosee Ten Broeck, bestirred himself with such consummate diligence, that at the end of three weeks he triumphantly brought home the whole twelfth labour of Hercules. Sybrandt was out of all patience in the mean while; but was amply rewarded for the delay, by the perfection of Master Goosee's work; which Uncle Dennis affirmed fitted just like wax, though heaven knows why. It certainly did not stick to him like wax, but hung around his body and limbs at a most respectful distance. All things being in readiness, Dennis gave Sybrandt his blessing, together with abundance of advice, backed by a purse of guineas, the music of which far transcended that of the spheres, which the poets make such harangues

about. If they were a little accustomed to the chinking of guineas, they would find there was no comparison between the two. "Damn it, Sybrandt," exclaimed little Ariel, "damn it, I should like to go with you; but, now I think of it, I can't, neither. I've promised old Ten Broeck to graft some pear-trees for him, as soon as the spring comes on."

"Good-by, massa Sybrandt," said Tjerck, now almost bent double with age and rheumatism—"Good-by, massa Sybrandt—neber see ole nigger again." Sybrandt was touched with this homely address, and the tears came into his eyes. He shook hands with the partner of his first adventures when he put on the toga and commenced man, and parted from him with sorrow. His speech to his young master was prophetic—they never met again. The old man died of a rheumatism, about a fortnight afterward. Peace to his soul! I honour his memory, for he was one of those faithful servants the race of which has long become extinct, amid the pious endeavours of painstaking folks who have nothing to do but better the condition of mankind, and meddle with other people's concerns.

While these things were going on in the country, our heroine was in what is called in homely phrase—I like homely phrases—in a sort of a quandary. Sometimes she was glad that her cousin was coming, and sometimes she was sorry. At one time she was very angry he was so long in coming, and at another she found it in her heart to wish he would not come at all; for mighty were her fears that the fashionable people of New York, and more especially the aides-de-camp, would laugh at his country manners and rustic apparel.

Sir Thicknesse and Gilfillan still continued their attentions. The former gentleman gathered himself together in consequence of being incited thereto by Mrs. Aubineau, and achieved a most triumphant piece of courtship. He actually spoke to our heroine three times in one morning. As to the tinder—I don't mean tender—hearted Milesian, he swore at least six dozen times a day that she was an angel, and that he was dying by barleycorns for the love of her sweet soul. He certainly was deeply smitten, after the fashion of a soldier and an Irishman, for, notwithstanding he was dying for love, he was the healthiest, merriest fellow in the world, and laughed, sang, danced, drank, gamed, and gallanted, just as if nothing was the matter with him.

Catalina had much ado to keep him in order and subjection to the rules of feminine delicacy, for your true Milesian is ever daringly enterprising. Even love cannot make a coward of him. Our heroine was always obliged to act on the defensive, when alone with him, and more than once had occasion to be seriously angry. One day he came in, humming his favourite Aileen Aroon, and, finding a miniature of Catalina which had just been taken by an eminent hand, (and which is still extant in the Vancour family), my gentleman was seized with the gallant whim of possessing himself of it, at least *pro tem*. Our heroine expostulated—Gilfillan laughed; she was angry—Gilfillan laughed still louder; she stated to him seriously the indelicacy of such a procedure, and the consequences of the picture being seen in his possession—all would not do: he replied in ranting and extravagant professions, swore he did not mean

to keep it, that he only wanted to worship her image in secret for one night, when he would return it, provided it was not demolished with kisses; and, finally, turned the whole into a joke, and set our heroine laughing in spite of her vexation. In short, he carried off the bawble, with a solemn lover's assurance of returning it the next day. But, the next day, and the next, he made some such odd, extravagant, or humorous excuse for retaining it one day longer, that Catalina yielded to his irresistible absurdity, and was actually ashamed to be angry. In about a week, however, he returned the picture, affirming at the same time that nothing but its being the actual representation of a divinity had miraculously preserved it from destruction by the intensity of his devotion. In a short time the whole affair was forgiven and forgotten by Catalina.

CHAPTER VIII.

A HERO IN SNUFF-COLOURED BREECHES.

A FEW days afterward, Sybrandt arrived in his snuff-coloured suit, which of itself was enough to ruin the brightest prospects of the most thriving wooer. Think what a contrast to the glories of an aide-de-camp—the scarlet, gold-laced coat, the bright spurs, and the gorgeous epaulettes! Poor Sybrandt! What superiority of the inside could weigh against this outside gear? Catalina received him, I cannot tell exactly how. She did not know, herself, and how should I? It was an odd, incomprehensible, indescribable compound of affected indifference and affected welcome, due to fear of showing too little feeling, and horror of exhibiting too much. In short, it was an awkward business, and Sybrandt made it still more so, by being suddenly seized with an acute fit of his old malady of shyness and embarrassment. Such a meeting has often been the prelude to an eternal separation.

The very next evening after his arrival, Sybrandt made his debut in the snuff-coloured suit, at a grand party given by his Excellency the Governor, in honour of his Majesty's birthday. All the aristocracy of the city were collected on this occasion, and, in order to give additional dignity to the ceremony, several people of the first consequence delayed making their appearance till almost seven o'clock. The hoops and heads were prodigious; and it is recorded of more

than one lady, that she went to this celebrated entertainment with her head sticking out of one of the coach windows, and her hoop out at the other. Their sleeves it is true were not quite so exuberant as those of the present graceful mode; nor was it possible to mistake a lady's arm for her body, as is sometimes done in these degenerate days by near-sighted dandies, one of whom, I am credibly informed, actually put his arm round the sleeve instead of the waist, in dancing the waltz last winter with a young belle just from Paris. Many a little sharp-toed, high-heeled satin shoe, sparkling in diamond-paste buckles, did execution that night; and one old lady in particular displayed, with all the pride of conscious superiority, a pair of gloves her mother had worn at court in the reign of the gallant Charles the Second, who came very near asking her to dance, and publicly declared her to be quite as elegant as Nell Gwyn, and almost as beautiful as the Dutchess of Cleveland. These consecrated relics descended in a direct line from generation to generation in this illustrious family, being considered the most valuable of its possessions, until they were sacrilegiously purloined by a gentleman of colour belonging to the house, and afterward exhibited during several seasons at the African balls. "To what base uses we may return, Horatio!"

All the dignitaries of the province were present at this celebration, for absence would have been looked upon as a proof of disloyalty. Here were the illustrious members of the governor's council, who represented his majesty in the second degree. Next came the chief-justice, and the puisne justices, all in those magnificent wigs which, as Captain Basil Hall as-

serts, give such superiority to the decisions of the judges of England,—seeing that, when the man's head is so full of law that it can hold no more, a vast superfluity of knowledge may be accommodated in the curls of the wig. Here too figured his majesty's attorney-general and his majesty's solicitor-general, who also wore wigs, but not so large as those of the judges, for that would have been considered a shrewd indication that they thought themselves equally learned in the law with their betters. Next came the rabble of little vermin that are quartered upon colonies in all ages and nations, to fatten on the spoils of industry, and tread upon the people who give them bread. Custom and excise officers, commissioners and paymasters, and every creeping thing which had the honour of serving and cheating his majesty in the most contemptible station, here took precedence of the ancient and present lords of the soil, and looked down upon them as inferior beings. His Majesty was the fountain of honour and glory; and his Excellency the Governor being his direct and immediate representative, all claims to distinction were settled by propinquity to that exalted functionary. Whoever was nearest to him in dignity of office was the next greatest man; and whatever lady could get nearest the governor's lady at a party was indubitably ennobled for that night, and became an object of envy ever afterward. Previous to the late Revolution, more than one of our aristocratic families derived their principal distinction from their grandmothers having once dined with the governor, and sat at the right hand of his lady at table.

If Sybrandt, the humble and obscure Sybrandt,

who had nothing to recommend him but talents, learning, and intrepidity of soul—if he was awed by the majesty of this illustrious assemblage of magnates, almost all of whom were capped with some sort of title, who can blame him? And if, as he contrasted his snuff-coloured dress with the gorgeous military costumes, he felt, in spite of himself, a consciousness of inferiority, who can wonder? And if, as he gazed on the big wigs of the judges, and on the vast circumference of those hoops in which the beauties of New York moved and revolved as in a universe of their own, he trembled to his inmost heart, who shall dare to question his courage?

To the weight of this feeling which pressed upon the modesty of his nature, and, as it were, enveloped his intellects in a fog, were added various other causes of vexation. When it was whispered about that he was the country beau, the accepted one of the belle of New York, the scrutiny he underwent would have shaken the heart of a roaring lion. The young ladies, who envied Catalina the conquest of the two aides, revenged themselves by tittering at her beau behind their fans.

“Lord,” whispered Miss Van Dam to Miss Twentyman, “did you ever see such an old-fashioned creature? I declare, he looks frightened out of his wits.”

“And then his snuff-coloured breeches!” said the other. “He is handsome, too: but what is a man without a red coat and epaulettes!”

My readers will excuse the insertion of a certain obnoxious word in the reply of the young lady, when they understand it was uttered in a whisper. I am the last man in the world to commit an outrage upon

female decorum, and am not so ignorant of what is due to the delicacy of the sex as not to know that though it is considered allowable for young ladies nowadays to expose their persons in the streets and at parties in the most generous manner, as well as to permit strangers to take them round the waist in a waltz, it would be indelicate in the highest degree to mention such matters in plain English. In fashionable ethics, indelicacy consists not so much in the thing itself as in the words used in describing it.

While the young ladies were criticising the merits of our hero's costume, the mothers were discussing his other attributes.

"They say he will be immensely rich," quoth Mrs. Van Dam.

"You don't say so!" cried Mrs. Van Borsum.

"Yes, he has two old bachelor uncles, as rich as Cræsus."

"Cræsus? who is he? I don't know him."

"A rich merchant in London, I believe."

"Well, but is it certain he will have the fortunes of both the old bachelors?"

"O, certain. One of them has adopted him, and the other made his will and left him all he has."

"What a pity he should marry such a flirt as that Miss Vancour!"

"O, a very great pity. Really, I am sorry for the young fellow; he deserves a better wife." And she thought of her daughter.

"Indeed he does," echoed the other lady; and she thought of *her* daughter. They both began to despair of the aides, and the military and the civil dignitaries; and the next object of their ambition was a rich provincial.

It was not many hours after this conversation before our friend Sybrandt was, at their particular instance, introduced to these good ladies, and by them to their daughters.

“Is he rich enough to take me *home*?” whispered Miss Van Borsum to her mother—home being the phrase for Old England at that time, when it was considered vulgar to belong to a colony.—“Is he rich enough to take me home?”

“As rich as Cræsus, the great London merchant.”

“Then I am determined to set my cap at him in spite of his snuff-coloured suit,” thought Miss Van Borsum. By one of those inexplicable manœuvres with which experienced dames contrive arrangements of this sort, Sybrandt was actually forced into dancing a minuet with Miss Van Borsum, although he would almost have preferred dancing a jig upon nothing. The young lady nearly equalled Catalina in this the most graceful and ladylike of all dances; and having a beautiful little foot *et cætera*, many were the keen darts she launched from her pointed satin shoes and diamond buckles at the hearts of the beholders. The dancing of our hero was not altogether despicable; but the snuff-coloured breeches!—they did his business for that night with all the young ladies and their mothers who did not know he was the heir of two rich old bachelors.

CHAPTER IX.

OF THE NOBLE REVENGE OF SIR THICKNESSE THROGMORTON.
THE AUTHOR LAUDS THE LADIES.

GILFILLAN, who was speedily advertised by several communicative and amiable elderly ladies, who could not bear to see him made a fool of, that Sybrandt was the really formidable man after all — eyed him with an air of taunting ridicule. Sybrandt was on the lookout too, and returned these demonstrations with interest. But Gilfillan was a generous, good-natured, fellow, and, ere long, that kind feeling with which every genuine Irishman looks at a stranger overcame the hostility of rivalry.

“By the galligaskins of my great ancestor, the Prince of Breffny,” quoth he, “there can be no danger in such a pair as that” — and he immediately introduced himself to our hero, with a frank cordiality that was irresistible. Sybrandt felt himself drawn towards him, in spite of his being a rival. “But, how did he know Gilfillan was his rival?” Pshaw! gentle reader, if you can’t comprehend that, you had better go and study metaphysics. Do you suppose it possible for him to converse with Madam Van Borsum and dance with her daughter, without knowing all about it? You must think women had no tongues in the days of your great-grandmother.

The behaviour of Sir Thicknesse Throgmorton was a perfect contrast to that of Colonel Gilfillan. He

affected to take not the least notice of Sybrandt, and pouted majestically with Catalina. He pretended not to hear when she addressed him — neglected to ask her to dance — came very near flirting with Miss Van Dam, only he did not know how — retired into a corner, where he stood two hours, sometimes resting on one leg, then on the other, like unto a goose; and finally refused to cut up a boiled turkey at supper, when requested by the Governor's lady: at which piece of unheard-of audacity the entire company threw down their knives and forks in astonishment. That very night he consulted his pillow, and determined to jilt Catalina, not having at that time the fear of the law before him, which hath since remunerated so many broken-hearted young ladies for the loss of one husband by enabling them to purchase a second suitor with the spoils of the first. He resolved, therefore, to desert our heroine, and break her heart. It never entered the head of this solid gentleman that she was very happy to be rid of him. But, to mortify her still more, he determined to pay his devoirs to another. For this purpose he selected the spouse of an honest burgher residing in Broad street, to whom he addressed a flaming love-letter in English. The good woman not being able to read it, one language being at that time considered quite enough for an honest woman, like a dutiful wife carried it to her husband to interpret for her. The worthy burgher was in the same predicament with his wife, and put it into the hands of Gilfillan, (who happened to be an old customer), for translation. After this he went forthwith to Sir Thicknesse to expostulate with him, and know what "de duyvel" he meant. "You can't marry mine

vrouw, 'cause she's *cot* one huspand alreaty;" said he, with great appearance of reason. Gilfillan made a capital story out of this, and the dignified baronet was so quizzed wherever he went, that he soon asked leave of absence, and returned to England, where it is said he found plenty of proud blockheads who mistook awkwardness for dignity, and clumsiness for the air noble, to keep him in countenance. The reader will be pleased to recollect that I am speaking of days of yore, and that the English beaux have since been greatly improved in grace and politeness by frequent association with our sprightly belles. But I am anticipating my story.

Be this as it may, it is with pain I confess that the snuff-coloured garments heretofore commemorated, the tittering of the young ladies, the criticisms of their mothers, the ill-natured side-speeches of Mrs. Aubineau, and, above all, the sly remarks of the officers, together with a certain secret consciousness on the part of our heroine that our hero made but an indifferent figure at this illustrious gala, operated somewhat unfavourably to the interests of Sybrandt. Women in general, (I mean before they are married), can scarcely be said to have any opinions of their own. They are entirely under the dominion of fashion. They will not do a thing which is perfectly innocent, because it is *not* the fashion; and they will frequently do things unbecoming the delicacy of the sex, because it *is* the fashion. Nay, their very virtues occasionally appear to be the sport of this power, which is nothing but the result of the whims and caprices of nobody knows whom—an emanation from nobody knows where—sometimes the eccentricity of a lady of *ton*—

sometimes the offspring of the vanity of an opera dancer—and often the invention of a fantastic milliner. A dress may be elegant and becoming, yet if it is no longer of the mode a lady who aspires to the least consideration will scarcely dare to be seen in it. Her very manners and morals, too, are more or less under the sway of this invisible despot; and ladies who resist every other species of tyranny submit to this with the resignation of martyrs. An unfashionable dress is death to a fashionable young lady, and an unfashionable lover, purgatory. When a man once comes to be laughed at in this world of butterflies his time is come;—whatever may be his merits, it is all over with him. Yet, notwithstanding these little foibles of women, none but a morose disappointed old bachelor will deny that they are delightful ingredients in the sour cup of life. In infancy, in manhood, and in old age—in our sports, enjoyments, and relaxations—they are our choicest companions; in the cares, troubles, and disappointments of this world, they are our best solace, our most faithful friends; and in the last hours of weakness, yea, on the bed of death, they are the ministering spirits to smooth our pillow, alleviate our sufferings, and finally close our eyes and wrap us in the winding-sheet, the last clothing of humanity.



CHAPTER X.

How oft from colour of men's clothes
Is born a frightful train of woes!

OUR heroine was a delightful specimen of the sex; born, too, before the commencement of the brilliant era of public improvement and the progress of mind. I could never learn that she spoke either French or Italian, though she certainly did English and Dutch, and that with a voice of such persuasive music, such low, irresistible pathos, that Gilfillan often declared there was no occasion to understand what she said to be drawn into any thing. But in truth she was marvellously behind the present age of development. She had never in her life attended a lecture on chemistry — though she certainly understood the ingredients of a pudding; and was entirely ignorant of the happy art of murdering time in strolling up and down Broadway all the morning, brought to such exquisite perfection by the ladies of this precocious generation. Indeed, she was too kind-hearted to murder any thing but beaux, and that she did unwittingly. Still, she was a woman, and could not altogether resist the contagion of the ridicule lavished on poor Sybrandt's snuff-coloured inexpressibles. Little did she expect the time would one day come when this would be the fashionable colour for pantaloons, in which modern Corinthians would figure at balls and assemblies, to the delight of all beholders.

Being a woman, then, she did not pause to inquire whether snuff-colour was not in the abstract just as respectable as blue or red, or even imperial purple. She tried it by the laws of fashion, and it was found wanting. Now, there is an inherent relation between a man and his apparel. As dress receives a grace sometimes from the person that wears it, so does it confer a similar benefit. They cannot be separated—they constitute one being; and hence some modern metaphysicians have been exceedingly puzzled to define the precise line of distinction between a dandy and his costume. It was through this mysterious blending of ideas that the fortunes of our hero came nigh to being utterly shipwrecked. Catalina confounded the obnoxious habiliments with the wearer thereof; and he too, for the few hours that the party lasted and the young lady remained under the influence of fashion, became ridiculous by the association.

By degrees she found herself growing ashamed of her old admirer, whose attentions she received with a certain embarrassment and disdain, which he saw and felt immediately; for Sybrandt was no fool, although he did wear a suit made by a Dutch tailor. Neither did he lack one spark of the spirit becoming a man conscious of his innate superiority over the gilded swarm around him. The moment he saw the state of Catalina's feelings, he met her more than half-way, and intrenched himself behind his old defences of silent neglect and proud humility. He spoke to her no more that evening. Though Catalina was conscious in her heart that she merited this treatment, this was a very different thing from being satisfied

with it. Gilfillan would not have behaved so, thought she, while she remembered how the worse she used him the more lowly and attentive he became. She mistook this submission to her whims or indifference for a proof of superior love, and therein fell into an error which has been fatal to the happiness of many a woman, and will be fatal to that of many more, in spite of all I can say on the subject. The error I would warn them against is that of confounding subserviency with affection. They know little of the hearts of men, if they are ignorant that the man who loves as he ought, and whose views are disinterested, will no more forget what is due to himself than what is due to his mistress. He will sink into the slave of no woman, whom he does not intend to make a slave in return. It is only your fortune-hunters that become the willing victims of caprice, and submit to every species of mortification the ingenuity of wayward vanity can invent, in the hope that this degrading vassalage may be at length repaid, not by the possession of the lady, but by her money. It must be confessed, that the event too often justifies the expectation. Be this as it may, before the conclusion of this important evening the company perceived evident signs of a coolness between the lovers; and Gilfillan, who watched them with the keen sagacity of a man of the world, redoubled his attentions. It is hardly necessary to say that our heroine received them with corresponding complacency—for, as I observed before, she was a woman; and what woman ever failed to repay the neglect of her lover, even though occasioned by a fault of her own, with ample interest? “If she thinks to make me jealous, she is very much

mistaken," thought Sybrandt, while he fretted in an agony of vexation.

The next morning Sybrandt breakfasted at home, saying little, and thinking a great deal—the true secret of being stupid. Mrs. Aubineau asked him fifty questions about the ball, and especially about Miss Van Borsum. But she could get nothing out of him, except that he admired that young lady exceedingly. This was a bouncer, but, "at lovers' perjuries—" the quotation is somewhat musty. Catalina immediately launched out in praise of Gilfillan, and made the same declaration in reference to him. This was another bouncer. He amused her and administered to her vanity; but, the truth is, she neither admired nor respected him. Still, the attentions of an aide-de-camp were what no mortal young lady of that age could bring herself voluntarily to relinquish, at least in New York. Our hero, though he had his mouth full of muffin at the moment Catalina expressed her approbation of Gilfillan, rose from the table abruptly, and, seizing his hat, sallied forth into the street, though Mrs. Aubineau called after to say she had made an engagement for him that morning.

"Catalina," said Mrs. Aubineau, "do you mean to marry that stupid man in the snuff-coloured clothes?"

"He has a great many good qualities."

"But he wears snuff-coloured breeches."

"He is brave, kind-hearted, generous, and possesses knowledge and talents."

"Well, but then he wears snuff-coloured breeches."

"He has my father's approbation, and—"

"And yours?"

"He had, when I gave it."

"But you repent it, now?" said Mrs. Aubineau, looking inquiringly into her face.

"He saved my life," replied Catalina.

"Well, that calls for gratitude, not love."

"He saved it twice."

"Well, then, you can be twice as grateful; that will balance the account."

"But he saved it four times."

"Well, double and quits again."

"But, my dear madam, I—I believe—nay, I am sure that I love my cousin in my heart."

"What! in his snuff-coloured suit?"

"Why, I am not quite sure of that, at least here in New York among the fine red coats and bright epaulettes; but I am quite sure I could love him in the country."

"In his snuff-colours?"

"In any colours, I believe. To tell you the truth, cousin, I am ashamed of the manner in which I received him after an absence of months, and of my treatment at the ball last night. I believe the evil spirit beset me."

"It was only the spirit of woman, my dear, whispering you to woo the bright prospect that beckons you. Do you know you can be a countess in prospective whenever you please?"

"Perhaps I might; but I'd rather be a happy wife than a titled lady."

"You would!" exclaimed her cousin, lifting up her eyes and hands in astonishment.

"Indeed I would."

"Then you must be more or less than woman," cried the other, panting for breath.

"Listen to me, my dear cousin. I know you meant it all for my happiness in giving encouragement to Sir Thicknesse and Colonel Gilfillan. But the truth is, I don't like either of them, and I do like my cousin Sybrandt. Sir Thicknesse is a proud, stupid dolt, without heart or understanding; and Colonel Gilfillan, with a thousand good qualities, or rather impulses — for he is governed by them entirely — is not, I fear, nay, I know, a man of integrity or honour."

"Not a man of honour!" exclaimed Mrs. Aubineau again, with uplifted eyes and hands, — "Why, he has fought six duels!"

"But he neither pays his debts nor keeps his promises."

"He'd fight a fiery dragon."

"Yes, but there are men, and very peaceable men, too, whom he is rather afraid of," said Catalina, smiling — "his tradesmen. The other day I was walking with him, and was very much surprised at his insisting we should turn down a dirty, narrow lane. Just as he had done so he changed his mind, and was equally importunate with me to turn into another. I did not think it necessary to comply with his wishes, and we soon met a tradesman who respectfully requested to speak with my colonel. 'Go to the devil, for an impudent scoundrel!' cried he, in a great passion, and lugged me almost rudely along, muttering, 'an impudent rascal, to be dunning a gentleman in the street!'"

"Well?"

"Well — I know enough of these tradesmen to be satisfied that they would not venture to dun an officer

in the street, if they could meet with him elsewhere. The example of my dear father has taught me that one of the first of our duties is a compliance with the obligations of justice."

"Well, Catalina, I must say people get very odd notions in the country. What do you mean to do with your admirers?"

"Why, from the behaviour of Sir Thicknesse last night, I hope I shall be troubled with him no more. If Colonel Gilfillan calls this morning, I shall take the opportunity of explaining to him frankly and explicitly the state of my obligations and affections. I will appeal to his sense of decorum and propriety for the discontinuance of his attentions; and, if he still persists, take special care to keep out of his way, until the state of the river will admit of my going home."

"And I," thought Mrs. Aubineau, "shall take special care to prevent all this."—"But what do you mean to do with the man in the snuff-coloured suit?"

"Treat him as he merits. I have been much more to blame than he—it is but just, therefore, that I should make the first advances to a reconciliation. I shall seize the earliest occasion of doing so, for his sake as well as my own; for my feelings since our first meeting here convince me I cannot treat him with neglect or indifference without sharing in the consequences."

"Well, you are above my comprehension, Catalina; but I can't help loving you. I can have no wish but for your happiness."

"Of that," said Catalina, good-humouredly, "I am perhaps old enough to judge for myself."

“I don’t know that, my dear. Women can hardly tell what is for their happiness, until they have been married a twelvemonth. But what do you mean to do with yourself to-day?”

“I mean to stay at home and wait the return of my cousin. The sooner we come to an understanding the better.”

“And I shall go visiting, as I have no misapprehensions to settle with Mr. Aubineau. Good morning—by the time I come back I suppose it will be all arranged. But, my dear Catalina,” added she, suddenly turning back, and addressing her with great earnestness — “my dear friend, do try and persuade him to discard his snuff-coloured suit, will you?”

“I shall leave that to you, cousin; for my part, I mean to endure it as a punishment for my bad behaviour to the owner.” But Catalina never had an opportunity of acting up to her heroic determination.

CHAPTER XI.

A GOOD RESOLUTION SOMETIMES COMES A DAY AFTER THE FAIR.

SYBRANDT had proceeded directly from Mr. Aubineau's to the quarters of Colonel Gilfillan, with a design of explaining his own claims on Catalina, and demanding a cessation of his attentions. He was told the colonel had stepped out for a few minutes, and requested to wait his return. During the interval, he happened to take up a music-book which lay on the table. It opened of itself, and a miniature fell from it on the floor. Sybrandt took this up with the intention of replacing it, when, to his dismay and horror, he discovered a likeness of Catalina, which Gilfillan, with an inexcusable want of delicacy and propriety, had procured to be copied from the original painting while in his possession. The blood of Sybrandt rushed to his heart, and thence to his face and fingers' ends, where it tingled and burnt like liquid fire. He stood pierced with rage and anguish, the picture in his hand, when Gilfillan entered, and was beginning in his gayest tones, with—

“My dear Mr. Westbrook, by my soul you're welcome”—when Sybrandt interrupted him without ceremony—“Colonel Gilfillan, when I inform you I have a deep interest in the question, I hope you will answer it frankly—May I ask where you got this picture?”

Gilfillan felt himself in the predicament of one who has been detected in doing what he cannot justify; he therefore sheltered himself under an air of haughty indifference: added to this, our hero's snuff-coloured garb did him another ill-turn here. It impressed upon the mind of Gilfillan that he had to do with a clod-hopper of the first magnitude, whom he might banter, or bully, or quiz, at pleasure. Never man was more mistaken than Colonel Gilfillan. He little suspected this homely suit covered a man that would not turn out of the path he had chosen for any thing in human shape. He accordingly replied, with a careless if not contemptuous hauteur, —

“Certainly, Mister — a — a — Mister Westbrook, you are at perfect liberty to ask any question of me — but, allow me to observe, it depends upon myself whether I choose to answer.”

“But, sir, you will permit me to say you *must* do me the favour to answer this question.”

“Must! You don't say so, sir!”

“Look ye, Colonel Gilfillan, this is no time for trifling; nor will I permit it. Is it known to you that an engagement, sanctioned by her parents, subsists between the original of this picture and myself?”

“By my soul, Mr. Westbrook, it is a matter of perfect indifference to me whether there does or not. If a lady makes an engagement, I suppose she has a right to break an engagement when she is tired of it; and, by the glory of the stars!, I am the man that will assist her any time in such a praiseworthy undertaking.”

“Very well then, I am to presume you were acquainted with the circumstance.”

"You may presume what you please, Mr. Westbrook — it's all one to me."

"You will not gratify my inquiries, then, though I have, I trust, justified the interest I take in the affairs of this young lady?"

"Faith, will not I," replied the colonel, negligently.

"Then let me tell you, sir —" Sybrandt's voice rung, his colour heightened, and his eye flashed.

"Hold there, young gentleman," interrupted the colonel. "From your look and so forth, I gather you are going to say something disagreeable; take care what you *do* say."

"I say to your caution what you were pleased to say to my information — that it is a matter of perfect indifference to me. And I say besides, Colonel Gilfillan, that I do not recognise in your preceding or your present conduct any thing that entitles you to particular respect."

"Before you go any further, my friend, let me ask you a civil question, — will you fight? — For it must come to that if you say the thousandth part of such another word."

Sybrandt went to the table, and in an instant presented a paper to the colonel, on which were the following words:

"Meet me at six to-morrow morning, at Hoboken, and I'll answer your question."

The colonel was somewhat startled at this prompt dealing. He was not frightened — nothing on earth could frighten him, except a dun, — but he was seized with an involuntary respect for the snuff-coloured gentleman, that made him almost regret having treated him so cavalierly. He changed his tone, instantly. Keeping his eye on the paper, he asked:

"At six, to-morrow?"

"At six."

"With pistols, did you say?"

"With pistols, if you please, or—"

"O, it's all the same to me. Mr. Westbrook, let me ask you one more question — do you mean to make your will beforehand? — because, if you do, I wish you'd leave me that picture after your death, as you don't seem inclined to give it me, while alive."

Sybrandt had all this while held the miniature in his clenched hand, almost unconsciously. But now, on being thus reminded of it, he threw it contemptuously on the table.

"That is treating the original discourteously," said the colonel, taking it up; "and, upon my soul, if you had not been beforehand with me I should have picked a quarrel with you for it. Faith, a charming lady, and I'll wear her image next my heart, to-morrow."

So saying, he coolly deposited the picture in his bosom, and Sybrandt inwardly vowed to himself that he would aim right at the resemblance of the faithless one.

"We understand each other now, Colonel Gilfilan?"

"O, faith, there can be no misunderstanding in such plain English."

"Good morning then, colonel."

"Good morning, Mr. Westbrook," answered the other. — "Now, who the devil would have taken that fellow for a lad of such mettle? I am determined to be friends with him the very next minute after I've blown his brains out."

The colonel was here suddenly interrupted by a

message from his excellency, requiring his immediate attendance. He accordingly hurried off to the government-house, while Sybrandt slowly turned towards the mansion of Mr. Aubineau, where Catalina was anxiously waiting to put her good resolutions in practice. A storm of contending passions agitated his mind, and when he came in sight of the house he turned away, heart-sick, and wandered for hours in the fields that skirted the city. Sometimes he determined to depart without seeing Catalina, and at other times resolved to see her once more, to reproach her with having trifled with his happiness, and then to bid farewell for ever.

CHAPTER XII.

GILFILLAN AND SYBRANDT SET OUT ON A LONG JOURNEY.

GILFILLAN, in the mean time, had an interview with the governor, who informed him that a packet had just arrived from England, with despatches apprising him that war had been declared between Great Britain and France, and directing him to make immediate preparations to defend the frontier against the inroads of the French and Indians.

"It is necessary to notify the commanding officer at Ticonderoga with the least possible delay, and that the bearer of the message be acquainted with my views on the subject. I have selected you for that purpose. When can you be ready, colonel?"

"To-morrow morning, at eight o'clock."

"That won't do; you must be ready to-day; a vessel is waiting for you."

"Impossible, sir," exclaimed Gilfillan, abruptly, remembering his engagement with Sybrandt.

"How? impossible! why, what can prevent you? You are a single man, and a soldier should be ready at a moment's warning."

"But, your excellency, I have an engagement which I cannot violate."

"With a lady?"

"No, with a gentleman."

"Well, I will make your excuses; so, be ready in three hours."

"Impossible," cried Gilfillan again.

His excellency looked offended.

"Colonel Gilfillan," said he, "I cannot conceive any engagement which can excuse a soldier from the performance of his duty to his country."

"An affair of honour, sir?"

"No, not even an affair of honour, colonel. Your first duty is to your country; she has bought your services by bestowing honours on you, and you have no right to throw away a life which belongs to her. To whom are you pledged?"

"To Mr. Westbrook, sir."

"Whew!" ejaculated his excellency; "I understand the business, now. But you shall place your honour in my hands, and I pledge you mine to make such explanations as shall save you harmless. Go, and be ready."

Gilfillan still lingered. "Colonel Gilfillan," said the governor, "either obey my orders or deliver me your sword. My business is pressing; yours may be deferred to another day; and I again pledge myself that your honour shall suffer no stain."

Gilfillan reflected a moment, and coldly replied, "I will be ready in two hours."

"Go, then, and make what preparations you can, and be here within that time. I will finish your despatches."

Gilfillan returned to his lodgings, and the first thing he did was to send the following note.

TO SYBRANDT WESTBROOK, ESQ.

SIR, — You will soon hear that war is declared between the cock and the lion; and this is to inform you,

that his excellency has ordered me with despatches to the frontier. I must depart on the spur, consequently the settlement of our little private affair must lie over for the present. But there is a time for all things, and we must wait with patience. When you can wait no longer, you will find me, probably, somewhere about Lake George or Ticonderoga. You know the motto of my family is, "Ready, aye ready." Adieu, for the present.

B. F. M. GILFILLAN.

His next step was to stride away to the mansion of Mr. Aubineau, for the purpose of taking leave of Catalina, whom he surprised in a deep revery, awaiting the return of Sybrandt.

"Colonel Gilfillan," said she, haughtily, and in displeasure at being thus disturbed, "I neither wished nor expected this visit."

"Do not be angry, madam; I come to say good-by. The calumet is buried, the tomahawk is dug up, and the two old bruisers are going to have another set-to."

"Explain yourself, colonel."

"War, bloody war, madam. I set out in one hour for the frontier, and Heaven only knows whether you will see poor Gilfillan again. Give him some hope; something to live upon when he is starving in the wilderness; some little remembrance to cheer him if he lives, or to hug to his heart when dying."

"I cannot hear such language, Colonel Gilfillan. Listen to me seriously, for I am going to speak seriously. I have been vain, silly, and unreflecting, in suffering, as I have done, your attentions, flighty and

half-jesting as they seemed. I never thought you in earnest."

"Not in earnest? Heavenly Powers! Have not my eyes, my tongue, my actions, a thousand times proved the sincerity of my passion? I loved you the first minute I saw you, and I shall love you the last moment I see the light of day."

"I am sorry for it."

"Sorry for it!—sorry that a warm-hearted, and, I will add, a generous, honourable soldier, casts his heart at your feet, lives in your smiles, and holds his life at a pin's fee, when he dreams he can lay it down in your service? I can't, for the soul of me, madam, see any ground for sorrow in that."

"I would not be the cause of misery to any human being."

"Ah! that's just what I love to hear you say. Then you will—you will be the cause of happiness to your poor servant?"

"I cannot, in the way you wish."

"No!—and why not, jewel of the world?"

"I cannot return your affections."

"Faith, madam, and that is the last thing I wish. I don't want you to return my affections, only just to give me your own in exchange."

"My affections are not in my power."

"You puzzle me, angel of obscurity. Upon my soul, if we haven't power over our affections, I don't know what else we can command. I should as soon doubt my power to command a corporal's guard as my own heart."

"In one word, Colonel Gilfillan, I am engaged to another."

"O, that's only your hand."

"My heart went with it, sir."

"Yes, but you took it back again?"

"No, sir, I gave it to Mr. Westbrook, and for ever."

"The man with the snu — Jesus, what is this world coming to!" thought Colonel Gilfillan. Then, overpowered by the genuine ardour of a brave and enterprising Milesian, he poured forth a flood of passionate eloquence. He besought her to love him, to marry him, to run away with him, to pity him, and, finally, to kill him on the spot. He fell on his knees, and there remained in spite of all her entreaties and commands. She was offended — what woman would not have been? She pitied him — what woman would not have done so? He seized her hands, and kissed them from right to left in a transport of impetuosity, and was gradually working himself up into a forgetfulness of all created things, except himself and his mistress, when he was awakened by the appearance of a figure just within the door. He started on his feet, choke-full of murder and love.

"I beg pardon," exclaimed the snuff-coloured apparition. "I beg pardon for my accidental intrusion. Don't let me interrupt you, colonel," — and straightway it disappeared.

Catalina started to her feet. "Leave me, sir", cried she, with angry vehemence. "Leave me this very instant, sir. You have destroyed my happiness for ever;" and she burst into a passion of tears.

The susceptible heart of Gilfillan was moved with this appearance of agony. "If," thought he, "she really loves this rustic, I am the last person to disturb a mutual affection. Faith, I see it's all over with me;

and now for the tomahawk and scalping knife. By my soul, I feel just at present as if I could drink the blood of a Christian; as to your copper-coloured Pagans, by the glory of my ancestors, I'll pepper them."

On conclusion of these wise reflections, he advanced towards Catalina, who retired with evident symptoms of fear and aversion.

"Miss Vancour," said Gilfillan, with solemnity, "do you really love this gentleman?"

"I do — I have reason to love him; he twice saved my life."

"Then, madam, I am sorry for what I have done, and ask your pardon."

He was proceeding to repeat the petition on his knees, when Catalina exclaimed with precipitation, "O! for Heaven's sake, no more of that!"

"Well then, madam, be assured that all that man can do to undo the harm I have done I will do — and so, farewell — may you be ten thousand times happier than I should have been had you preferred me, and that's altogether impossible." So saying, he bowed himself out, leaving Catalina in that state of misery which combines the pangs of the heart with the feeling of self-condemnation. "Had not my vanity tempted me to encourage this man," thought she, "I should have been spared the mortification of this present moment, the wretchedness I see in the future. The fault is all my own — would that the punishment might be so, too; but I have wounded two generous, noble hearts."

On the departure of Gilfillan, Sybrandt in a mood of desperation forced himself into the presence of our heroine, with a magnanimous resolution of relinquish-

ing his claims, and declaring her free to marry whom she pleased. She received him with an humbled spirit whence all the pride of woman was banished. She attempted a faltering explanation.

“Sybrandt” — said she — “Sybrandt — I — I have something to say to you — I —”

“It is unnecessary ; I know all,” replied he, interrupting her. “Farewell, Catalina — you are free.”

A few hours after, he was on his way up the river. Gilfillan's note had apprised him of the necessary postponement of their meeting, and he hoped to overtake him at Albany, and there frankly renounce all pretension to Catalina. It was a hard struggle between revenge and a nobler feeling. Colonel Gilfillan, however, kept the start of him, and some time elapsed before they met again. Sybrandt returned home, and buried his secret in his own bosom. When questioned by Colonel or Madam Vancour on the subject of Catalina, he answered, sometimes with embarrassment, sometimes with negligence. They suspected something disagreeable had occurred, yet could not tell what. But public events soon came about which occupied, almost exclusively, the attention of Colonel Vancour and his family. Rumours of wars, of burnings and massacres on the frontier, coming nearer and nearer every day, brought the sense of danger home to the very bosoms of the people of Albany and of the Flats. Rural quiet was banished from the firesides of the peaceful Dutchmen ; rural labour ceased in the fields ; and Ceres and Cupid, and all their train of harvests, flowers, fruits, sighs, smiles, hopes, wishes, promises, and deceits, gave place to images of fire and blood. Even little Ariel lost his

vivacity at times, and no longer talked of ringing the pigs' noses. He took down his rusty musket, and polished it as bright as silver. He employed himself in running bullets, and in other warlike preparations, and even meditated joining the army at Ticonderoga. "Damn it, Sybrandt," would he say, "suppose you and I make a campaign, hey?"

CHAPTER XIII.

ADIEU FOR A WHILE TO THE DUTCHMAN'S FIRESIDE.

SYBRANDT not only meditated, but had determined on, such a course. About this time his old friend and host, Sir William Johnson, paid a visit to Colonel Vancour, to arrange with him a plan for subsisting the army in the uncultivated regions about Lake George and Lake Champlain. Sybrandt took the opportunity to offer his services, and Sir William gladly accepted them. "I want a volunteer aide," said he, "and you are the very man. When can you be ready?"

"In five minutes."

"Good; I like short answers: they are the signs of prompt actions. I will give you till the day after to-morrow."

Sybrandt went immediately to the good Dennis to announce his intention, and ask his consent to be a soldier. There was at that time a latent spark of warlike spirit alive in the bosom of the peaceful cultivators of the field. Every where the proximity of the Indians made a residence near the frontier, or indeed far from the cities and military stations, one of danger and alarm, and kept up a feeling of manly preparation.

"Right, my boy. I am too old now to go myself, and thou shalt be my substitute. Thou shalt take the best horse from my stable, the truest servant of

my household, and the warmest blessing of my heart, and go forth."

Sybrandt set about his preparations, and tried to banish every thing else from his recollection. The morning after his conversation with Sir William, he went over to Colonel Vancour's to tell him he was ready. The colonel and Madam looked inquisitively in his face, and wondered if he would leave any message or letter for Catalina. But he never mentioned her name. "I must have my daughter home," thought the good colonel. "I am glad this foolish engagement is broken off," thought his good wife; and her silk gown rustled with sympathetic pride as she dreamed of still living to be the mother of a real titled lady. That evening Sybrandt visited some of his old haunts. "I will see them before I go; perhaps I may never see them again." So he rambled out alone, in the mild twilight of an early spring day. The sacred calm of the country, so different from the racket of the town, disposed his soul to the tenderest melancholy. Past scenes and early recollections thronged on his memory, while he wandered along his accustomed paths, where every object reminded him of the woman who had trifled with his affections. By degrees, the thought of her ill-treatment roused a salutary feeling of indignation, and outraged pride came to the relief of his morbid sensibility. He shook the incumbent weight of sickly lassitude from his spirit, wiped the starting tear from his eye, and returned home with a manly resolution to meet his future fortunes, whatever these might be, with fortitude and resignation.

"Sybrandt," said Colonel Vancour, on taking leave

after supper, — “Sybrandt, have you written to Catalina?”

“No, sir.”

“Have you received any letters from her, since your return?”

“None, sir.”

“And what does all this mean, young man?”

“It means, sir,” replied Sybrandt, almost choking, — “it means that — she will one day tell you what it means — I cannot.”

The next day, Colonel Vancour wrote to his daughter, to return home, under the protection of the wife of an officer he knew was on the eve of joining the army on the frontier.

By daylight Sir William and his aide joined a detachment on its march to Ticonderoga under the temporary command of the former. They rode for some distance, now and then encountering a solitary habitation; but on leaving Glen's Falls all traces of civilized man were lost in the vast uncultivated empire of nature. The troops which our hero accompanied formed part of a crack regiment, distinguished for its technical discipline, exquisite neatness, and veteran service in the wars of Europe. The soldiers were proud of their perfect equipment, and the officers valued themselves on the splendour of their embroidery and epaulettes, which only furnished a mark for the savages, and cost many a gallant warrior his life. The first thing Sir William did was to attempt initiating them into some of the modes of Indian warfare. He set the officers the example of doffing their rich accoutrements, and substituting a common soldier's coat, with the skirts cut off. He denounced all

displays of glittering finery, which answered no other purpose here than enabling the savages to descry the march of an enemy at a distance. The gun-barrels were blackened for the same reason; and for boots and spatterdashes he substituted Indian leggins of strong coarse cloth. But what mortified the vanity of these military heroes more than all was his peremptory order to crop their powdered hair, which at that time was looked upon as the most valued ornament of a soldier. The detachment had moreover been provided with a mighty kitchen apparatus of chairs, tables, cooking utensils, and other luggage, which, however convenient in European wars, was here in the wilderness a useless, nay, a dangerous encumbrance. It rendered their march through the tangled woods and untrodden paths more slow and difficult, and embarrassed them in the day of battle. Sir William, on the first halt they made for refreshment, invited the officers to dine with him in his tent. Instead of chairs and tables, they found only bearskins spread on the ground, and their host seated on a log of wood, ready to receive them. When the dinner was brought in, which consisted of a large dish of pork and pease, Sir William coolly took out of his pocket a leathern case, and, drawing forth a knife and fork, deliberately and with great gravity divided the meat, helping each to a portion. The gentlemen looked round for implements with which to eat their allowance, but, finding none, remained in indignant embarrassment.

“Gentlemen,” said he, at length, “is it possible that soldiers destined for a service like ours have come without the necessary instruments of this kind? Did

you expect to find in the wilderness of America the means or the opportunity of enjoying the luxuries and conveniences afforded in the heart of Europe? But you must not lose your dinner," added he, smiling, and directing the servant to furnish each of the guests with a knife and fork similar to his own, which he desired them to preserve with care. "It will be difficult, where we are going, to supply their loss," said he.

The officers, who were proud of their experience in the splendid wars of Europe, where the theatre was a continent, and the spectators the people of a continent, received these lessons of practical wisdom as little less than insults. To be lectured by a PROVINCIAL OFFICER!—it was not to be borne! What could he know about the science of war, or the discipline of great armies, who never saw ten thousand regular troops together in his life? They grumbled, and put on the air of enforced submission. But Sir William Johnson was not a man to be turned from his purpose by murmurs or opposition. He had been accustomed to be his own master and the master of others in the wilderness. He had, by the exercise of courage, talents, energy, and perseverance, conquered the stubborn minds of the proudest, the most daring and impracticable race that ever trod the earth, either in the Old or the New World. In short, among savage and civilized men he exercised the only divine right ever conferred on man—the right of commanding, on the ground of superior physical and mental energies.

Sybrandt admired and studied the character of this singular personage, who combined as much power of mind and body as was ever, perhaps, concentrated in

one individual. But our hero continued, notwithstanding his resolution to shake off the depression of his spirits, to labour under the nightmare of indolent, gloomy lassitude. He spoke only when spoken to, and displayed little alacrity in performing those military duties which Sir William committed to him, principally with a view to rouse his dormant energies into action. One day, as they were slowly ascending the mountain which bounds the southern extremity of Lake George, Sybrandt was more silent and abstracted than usual.

"Young man," abruptly exclaimed Sir William, — "young man, are you in love, yet?"

Sybrandt was startled; and the red consciousness shone in his face.

"I am answered," said Sir William. "But look! we are at the summit of the mountain. The water you see, studded with green islands, and bounded by those mountains tipped with gold, is Lake George. At the extremity of Lake George is Ticonderoga; at Ticonderoga is glory, and danger. Resolve this instant to be a man; to devote yourself to the present and the future; to forget the past, at least so far as it interferes with the great duties a soldier owes to his country; or return home this instant. Young man, I did not bring you here to ruminate, but to act."

Sybrandt rode close up to him, and exclaimed, in a low, suppressed tone —

"Sir William Johnson, show me an enemy, and I will show myself a man."

"Good!" cried Sir William, slapping him on the shoulder, "good! I see you only want action; and I will take care you shall have enough of it." They

descended the mountain, and were accommodated that night in Fort George, close on the margin of the lake,—that beautiful lake, to which neither poetry nor painting can do justice, and which unites within itself every element of loveliness and of majesty. It was then the mirror of a wilderness; now it reflects in its bosom all the charms of cultivation. Hither, in the summer season, when tired of the desperate monotony of Ballston and Saratoga, the wandering devotees of fashion, who seek pleasure everywhere except where it is to be found, resort, to become wearied with the beauties of nature, as they have been with the allurements of art. It is indeed a delightful nest for love, music, poetry, and inspiration;—in which to indulge luxurious reveries, to recall past times, meditate on future prospects, or gaze enraptured on the sublime and beautiful scene, and perchance recall

“Some ditty of the ancient day,
When the heart was in the lay.”

CHAPTER XIV.

A WHITE SAVAGE.

AFTER resting one night at Fort George, they proceeded down the lake in boats which were waiting for them, and in good time arrived at Ticonderoga. Here Sir William turned over the reinforcement he had brought with him to its proper division, and himself took command of the provincials and Indian allies—the latter consisting of the warriors of the Five Nations. The position of Ticonderoga, or *Old Ti*, as it is familiarly called, commands the best route between Canada and New York, and, consequently, it had always been a bone of contention between the French and English, while the former possessed the Canadas and the latter the United States. At the period of which I am now speaking, here was assembled the finest army, as to numbers, discipline, and appointments, that had hitherto been collected in one body in the New World.

The commander was a brave, experienced, and capable officer; but he knew little of the nature of an irregular warfare in the wilderness against savages and woodsmen, and, what was far worse, was too proud to learn. He might have found, in Colonel Vancour and Sir William Johnson, most able and efficient instructors; but he could not brook the idea of being schooled by *provincials*, and gloomy were the forebodings of these two experienced gentlemen, dur-

ing their last conference, that the obstinacy of the commanding general, in applying the tactics of Europe to this campaign of the woods, would be fatal to the expedition, and occasion the defeat, if not the destruction, of this fine army.

Sir William was not a man to be inactive in such stirring times, or, indeed, at any time; and he determined that Sybrandt should have little leisure for devouring his own heart in idleness and disappointment. He accordingly detached him on various duty;—sometimes to gain information of the motions of the enemy, who were said to be advancing in force; sometimes with parties up Lake George to the fort of that name, which was a principal depôt of supplies from Albany; and sometimes to scour the woods in search of vagrant parties of hostile Indians, of whom large numbers were attached to the army of the enemy. In all these services Sybrandt acquitted himself with courage and discretion. “Bravo,” would Sir William exclaim; “you were made for a soldier—to command, not to obey—to lead men, not to be led by a woman. I see I shall make something of you. To-night I shall put you to the knife, and try your metal to the utmost.”

“I am ready,” answered Sybrandt.

“Listen, then,” replied Sir William. “Our general is a good soldier and an able officer, so far as mere bravery and an acquaintance with European tactics go. But he is not fit to command here; he is not the Moses to lead armies through the wilderness. He is ignorant of his enemy, and undervalues him: bad, both bad. He has not the least conception that a host of savages may be within twenty feet of him

and he neither see nor hear them. He cannot divest himself of the absurd notion, that they must have baggage-wagons, and horses for their artillery, and depôts of provisions, and all the paraphernalia of a regular army on the plains of Flanders. He does not know that they are neither heard nor seen till they are felt, that they travel like the wind, and with as little encumbrance as the wind. He will consequently be taken by surprise and cut to pieces, unless I and my provincials and red-skins make up for his careless folly by our wise vigilance. Now to the point.

“From various indications, I am fully satisfied that the enemy is in much greater force than he chooses to have us believe; and this is what I want to be certain of before to-morrow morning, because I have been apprised by the general that he considers it disgraceful to his majesty’s arms to be cooped up in a fort by an inferior enemy. He means to march out in battle-array to-morrow, with drums beating, colours flying, and every other device to certify the enemy of his motions. If he does, it requires not the spirit of prophecy to predict that he will sacrifice, not only the interests of his country, but the lives of hundreds, perhaps thousands, of brave men. The service is perilous: why should I disguise it? it is almost certain death. But you are no common man;—nay, I don’t flatter you. I would guarantee your marching up to the cannon’s mouth without winking an eye, if it were necessary. I would go myself on this service, but my rank and the command I hold make it impossible.”

“Name the service, Sir William. Life is of little value to me, and if—

"Pish!" exclaimed the knight, impatiently. "Disgust for life is an ignoble impulse to heroic actions. I wish you to be animated by the love of your country and the desire of glory. Such motives only are worthy of the man who risks his life in undertakings of extreme peril."

"Sir William Johnson," replied Sybrandt, "you are my superior in rank, and in merit if you please, but this gives you no right to insult my feelings, nor am I inclined to submit to it. As a soldier, do with me as you please."

"You are right, young man, and I beg your pardon. Well then, let your motive be what it may; if not ambition, love: they are equally powerful, if not equally noble. If your mistress is true, she will rejoice in your success; if she is false, the most noble revenge you can take will be to make her regret having lost the opportunity of participating in your fame. Give me your hand;—are we friends again?"

Sybrandt received the proffered courtesy with grateful and affectionate respect.

"What escort am I to have?" asked he.

"None; an escort could not fail to betray you. A single man is all I can allow."

"As you please; I am satisfied."

Sir William then proceeded to instruct him in the course he was to pursue. To go on this expedition by land would subject him to inevitable discovery. He was therefore to be furnished with an Indian canoe and a man to paddle it; and, under cover of the night, which promised to be sufficiently dark, to proceed silently down the strait at the upper end of Lake Champlain, but only so far that he could as-

surely return before daylight. He was enjoined not to neglect this, for the narrowness of this portion of the lake, lined as it was without doubt by parties of skulking Indians, would expose him to certain death, if once seen.

"Should you discover the position of the enemy," continued Sir William, "you must depend upon your own sagacity, and that of Timothy Weasel, for the direction of your subsequent conduct."

"Timothy Weasel! Who is he?"

"What! have you never heard of Timothy Weasel, the Varmounter, as he calls himself?"

"Never."

"Well then, I must give you a sketch of his story before I introduce him. He was born in New Hampshire, as he says, and, in due time, as is customary in those parts, married, and took possession, by right of discovery I suppose, of a tract of land in what was at that time called 'the New Hampshire grants.' Others followed him, and in the course of a few years a little settlement was formed of real 'cute Yankees, as Timothy calls them, to the aggregate of sixty or seventy, men, women, and children. They were gradually growing in wealth and numbers, when, one night, in the dead of winter, they were set upon by a party of Indians from Canada, and every soul of them, except Timothy, was either consumed in the burning houses or massacred in the attempt to escape. I have witnessed in the course of my life many scenes of horror, but nothing like that which he describes, in which his wife and eight children perished. Timothy was left for dead by the savages, who, as is their custom, departed at the dawn, for fear the news of this

inroad might rouse the people of some of the neighbouring settlements, in time to overtake them before they reached home. When all was silent, Timothy, who, though severely wounded in a dozen places, had, as he says, only been 'playing 'possum,' raised himself up and looked around him. The smoking ruins, mangled limbs, blood-stained snow, and the whole scene, as he describes it with odd pathos, is enough to make one's blood run cold. He managed, by dint of incredible exertions, to reach the nearest settlement, distant about forty miles. Here he told his story, and then was put to bed, where he lay some weeks. In the mean time the people of the settlement had gone and buried the remains of his unfortunate family and neighbours. When Timothy got well, he visited the spot, and, while viewing the ruins of the houses and musing over the graves of all that were dear to him, solemnly devoted the remainder of his life to revenge. He accordingly buried himself in the woods, and built a cabin about twelve miles hence, in a situation the most favourable to killing the 'critters,' as he calls the savages. From that time until now he has waged a perpetual war against them, and, according to his own account, sacrificed almost a hecatomb to the manes of his wife and children. His intrepidity is wonderful, and his sagacity in the pursuit of this grand object of his existence beyond all belief. I am half a savage myself, but I have heard this man relate stories of his adventures and escapes which make me feel myself, in the language of the red-skins, 'a woman' in comparison with this strange compound of cunning and simplicity. It is inconceivable with what avidity he will hunt an Indian; and the keenest sportsman does

not feel a hundredth part of the delight in bringing down his game, that Timothy does in witnessing the mortal pangs of one of these 'critters.' It is a horrible propensity: but, to lose all in one night, and to wake the next morning and see nothing but the mangled remains of wife, children, all that man holds most dear to his inmost heart, is no trifle. If ever man had motive for revenge, it is Timothy. Such as he is, I employ him, and find his services highly useful. He is a compound of the two races, and combines all the qualities essential to the species of warfare in which we are now engaged. I have sent for him, and expect him here, every moment."

As Sir William concluded, Sybrandt heard a long dry sort of "H-e-e-m-m," ejaculated just outside of the door. "That's he," exclaimed Sir William; "I know the sound. It is his usual expression of satisfaction at the prospect of being employed against his old enemies, the Indians. — Come in, Timothy."

Timothy accordingly made his appearance, forgot his bow, and said nothing. Sybrandt eyed his associate with close attention. He was a tall, wind-dried man, with extremely sharp, angular features, and a complexion deeply bronzed by the exposures to which he had been subjected for so many years. His scanty head of hair was of a sort of sunburnt colour; his beard, of a month's growth at least; and his eye of sprightly blue never rested a moment in its socket. It glanced from side to side, and up and down, and here and there, with indescribable rapidity, as though in search of some object of interest, or apprehensive of sudden danger. It was a perpetual silent alarum.

"Timothy," said Sir William, "I want to employ you to-night."

"H-e-m-m," answered Timothy

"Are you prepared to depart immediately?"

"What, right off?"

"Ay, in less than no time."

"I guess I am."

"Very well — that means you are certain."

"I'm always sartin of my mark."

"Have you your gun with you?"

"The critter is just outside the door."

"And plenty of ammunition?"

"Why, what under the sun should I do with a gun and no ammunition?"

"Can you paddle a canoe so that nobody can hear you?"

"Can't I? h-e-e-m-m!"

"And you are all ready?"

"I 'spect so. I knew you didn't want me for nothing, and so got every thing to hand."

"Have you any thing to eat by the way?"

"No; if I only stay out two or three days I sha'n't want any thing."

"But, you are to have a companion."

Timothy here manufactured a sort of linsey-woolsey grunt, betokening disapprobation.

"I'd rather go alone."

"It is necessary that you should have an associate. This young gentleman will go with you."

Timothy hereupon subjected Sybrandt to a rigid scrutiny of those busy eyes of his, which seemed to run over him as quick as lightning.

"I'd rather go by myself," said he, again.

"That is out of the question; so, say no more about it. Are you ready to go now — this minute?"

"Yes."

Sir William then explained the object of the expedition to Timothy, much in the same manner as previously to Sybrandt.

"But mayn't I shoot one of these tarnil critters if he comes in my way?" said Timothy, in a tone of great interest.

"No; you are not to fire a gun, nor attempt any hostility whatever, unless it is neck or nothing with you."

"Well, that's what I call hard; but, maybe it will please God to put our lives in danger — that's some comfort."

The knight now produced two Indian dresses, which he directed them to put on, somewhat against the inclinations of friend Timothy, who observed, that if he happened to see his shadow in the water he should certainly mistake it for one of the tarnil critters, and shoot himself. Sir William then with his own hand painted the face of Sybrandt so as to resemble that of an Indian — an operation not at all necessary in the case of Timothy. *His* toilet was already made; *his* complexion required no embellishment. This done, the night having now set in, Sir William, motioning silence, led the way cautiously to one of the gates of Ticonderoga, which was opened by the sentinel, and they proceeded swiftly and silently to the high bank which hung over the strait in front of the fort. A little bark canoe lay moored at the foot, in which Sybrandt and Timothy placed themselves, flat on the

bottom, each with his musket and accoutrements at his side, and a paddle in his hand.

"Now," said Sir William, almost in a whisper, — "now, luck be with you, boys; remember, you are to return before daylight, without fail."

"But, Sir William," said Timothy, coaxingly, "now, *mayn't* I take a pop at one of the tarnil critters, if I meet 'em?"

"I tell you, No!" replied the other; — "unless you wish to be popped out of the world when you come back. Away with you, my boys."

Each plied his paddle; and the light feather of a boat darted away with the swiftness of a bubble in a whirlpool.

CHAPTER XV.

A NIGHT ADVENTURE.

"It's plaguy hard," grumbled Timothy to himself.

"What?" quoth Sybrandt.

"Why, not to have the privilege of shooting one of these varmints."

"Not another word," whispered Sybrandt; "we may be overheard from the shore."

"Does he think I don't know what's what?" again muttered Timothy, plying his paddle with a celerity and silence that Sybrandt vainly tried to equal.

The night gradually grew dark as pitch. Earth and air were confounded together in utter obscurity — as far as Sybrandt Westbrook was concerned at all events. Not a breath of wind disturbed the foliage of the trees, that hung invisible to all eyes but those of Timothy, who seemed to see best in the deepest gloom; not an echo, not a whisper disturbed the dead silence of nature, as they darted along unseen and unseeing, — at least our hero was sensible of nothing but darkness.

"Whisht!" aspirated Timothy, at length, so low that he could scarcely hear himself; and, after making a few strokes with his paddle so as to shoot the canoe out of her course, cowered to the bottom. Sybrandt did the same, peering just over the side of the boat, to discover if possible the reason of Timothy's manœuvres. Suddenly he heard, or thought he heard, the

measured sound of paddles dipping lightly into the water. A few minutes more, and he saw five or six little lights glimmering indistinctly through the obscurity, apparently at a great distance. Timothy raised himself up suddenly, seized his gun, and pointed it for a moment at one of the lights; but, recollecting the injunction of Sir William, immediately resumed his former position. In a few minutes the sound of the paddles died away, and the lights disappeared.

"What was that?" whispered Sybrandt.

"The Frenchmen are turning the tables on us, I guess," replied the other. "If that canoe isn't going a-spying jist like ourselves, I'm quite out in my calculation."

"What! with lights? They must be great fools."

"It was only the fire of their pipes, which the darkness made look like so many candles. I'm thinking what a fine mark those lights would have bin; and how I could have peppered two or three of them, if Sir William had not bin so plaguy obstinate."

"Peppered them! Why, they were half-a-dozen miles off."

"They were within fifty yards — the critters; I could have broken all their pipes as easy as kiss my hand."

"How do you know they were critters, as you call the Indians?"

"Why, did you ever hear so many Frenchmen make so little noise?"

This reply was perfectly convincing; and, Sybrandt again enjoining silence, they proceeded with the same celerity, and in the same intensity of darkness as before, for more than an hour. This brought them,

at the swift rate they were going, a distance of fifteen miles or more from the place of their departure.

Turning a sharp angle, at the expiration of the time just specified, Timothy suddenly stopped his paddle as before, and crouched again. Sybrandt had no occasion to inquire the reason of this action; for, happening to look towards the shore, he could discover at a distance innumerable lights glimmering and flashing amid the obscurity, and rendering the darkness beyond the sphere of their influence still more profound. These lights appeared to extend several miles along what he supposed to be the strait or lake, which here and there reflected their glancing rays upon its quiet bosom.

"There they are, the critters," whispered Timothy, exultingly; "we've treed 'em at last, I swow. Now, mister, let me ask you one question — will you obey my orders?"

"If I like them," said Sybrandt.

"Ay, like or no like. I must be captain, for a little time at least."

"I have no objection to benefit by your experience."

"Can you play Ingen when you are put to it?"

"I have been among them, and know something of their character and manners."

"Can you talk Ingen?"

"No."

"Ah! Your education has been sadly neglected. But come, there's no time to waste in talking Ingen or English. We must get right in the middle of these critters. Can you creep on all-fours without waking up a cricket?"

"No."

"Plague on it! I wonder what Sir William meant by sending you with me. I could have done better by myself. Are you afeard?"

"Try me."

"Well, then, I must make the best of the matter. The critters are camped out — I see by their fires — by themselves. I can't stop to tell you every thing; but you must keep close to me, do jist as I do, and say nothing; that's all."

"I am likely to play a pretty part, I see."

"Play! You'll find no play here, I guess, mister. Set down close; make no noise; and if you go to sneeze or cough, take right hold of your throat, and let it go downwards."

Sybrandt obeyed his injunctions; and Timothy proceeded towards the lights, which appeared much farther off in the darkness than they really were, handling his paddle with such lightness and dexterity that Sybrandt could not hear the strokes. In this manner they swiftly approached the encampment, until they could distinguish a confused noise of shoutings and hallooings, which gradually broke on their ears in discordant violence. Timothy ceased paddling, and listened.

"It is the song of those tarnil critters, the Outawas. They're in a drunken frolic, as they always are, the night before going to battle. I know the critters, for I've popped off a few, and can talk and sing their songs pretty considerably, I guess. So, we'll be among 'em right off. Don't forget what I told you, about doing as I do and holding your tongue."

Cautiously plying his paddle, he now shot in close

to the shore whence the sounds of revelry proceeded, and made the land at some little distance. They then drew up the light canoe into the bushes, which here closely skirted the waters. "Now leave all behind but yourself, and follow me," whispered Timothy, as he carefully felt whether the muskets were well covered from the damps of the night; and then laid himself down on his face, and crawled along under the bushes with the quiet celerity of a snake in the grass.

"Must we leave our guns behind?" whispered Sybrandt.

"Yes, according to orders; but it's a plaguy hard case. Yet, upon the whole, it's best; for if I was to get a fair chance at one of these critters, I believe in my heart my gun would go off clean of itself. But, hush! Shut your mouth as close as a powder-horn."

After proceeding some distance, Sybrandt getting well-scratched by the briers, and finding infinite difficulty in keeping up with Timothy, the latter stopped short.

"Here the critters are," said he, in the lowest whisper.

"Where?" replied the other, in the same tone.

"Look right before you."

Sybrandt followed the direction, and beheld a group of five or six Indians seated round a fire, the waning lustre of which cast a fitful light upon their dark countenances, whose savage expression was heightened to ferocity by the stimulant of the debauch in which they were engaged. They sat on the ground, swaying backward and forward, and from side to side, ever and anon passing the canteen from one to the other, and sometimes rudely snatching it

away, when they thought either was drinking more than his share. At intervals they broke out into yelling and distuneful songs, filled with extravagant boastings of murders, massacres, burnings, and plunderings, mixed up with threatenings of what they would do to the redcoat Long Knives on the morrow. One of these songs recited the destruction of a village, and bore a striking resemblance to the bloody catastrophe of poor Timothy's wife and children. Sybrandt could not understand it, but he could hear the quick suppressed breathings of his companion, who, when it was done, muttered under his breath and in a tone of smothered vengeance,—“If I only had my gun!”

“Stay here a moment,” whispered he, as he crept cautiously towards the noisy group, which all at once became perfectly quiet, and remained in the attitude of listening.

“Huh!” growled one, who appeared by his dress to be the principal.

Timothy responded, in a few Indian words which Sybrandt did not comprehend; and, raising himself from the ground, suddenly appeared in the midst of them. A few words were rapidly interchanged; and Timothy then brought forward his companion, whom he presented to the Outawa, who greeted him, and handed him the canteen, now almost empty.

“My brother does not talk,” said Timothy.

“Is he dumb?” asked the chief of the Outawas.

“No; but he has sworn not to open his mouth till he has struck the body of a Long Knife.”

“Good,” said the other; “he is welcome.”

After a pause he went on, at the same time eying

Sybrandt with suspicion; though his faculties were obscured by the fumes of the liquor, which he still continued to drink and hand round at short intervals.

"I don't remember the young warrior. Is he of our tribe?"

"He is; but he was stolen by the Mohawks many years ago, and only returned lately."

"How did he escape?"

"He killed two chiefs while they were asleep by the fire, and ran away."

"Good," said the Outawa, and for a few moments sunk into a kind of stupor. From this he suddenly roused himself, grasped his tomahawk, started up, rushed towards Sybrandt, and, raising his deadly weapon, stood over him in the attitude of striking. Sybrandt remained perfectly unmoved, waiting the stroke.

"Good," said the Outawa again; "I am satisfied; the Outawa never shuts his eyes at death. He is worthy to be our brother. He shall go with us to battle to-morrow."

"We have come just in time," said Timothy. "Does the white chief march against the redcoats to-morrow?"

"He does."

"Has he men enough to fight them?"

"They are like the leaves on the trees," said the other.

By degrees, Timothy drew from the Outawa chief the number of Frenchmen, Indians, and *coureurs des bois*, who composed the army; the time when they were to commence their march; the course they were to take, and the outlines of the plan of attack, in case

the British either waited for them in the fort or met them in the field. By the time he had finished his examination, the whole party, with the exception of Timothy, Sybrandt, and the chief, were fast asleep. In a few minutes after, the two former affected to be in the same state, and began to breathe heavily. The Outawa chief nodded to and fro; then sunk down like a log, and remained insensible to every thing around him, in the sleep of drunkenness.

Timothy lay without motion for a while, then turned himself over, and rolled about from side to side, managing to strike against each of the party, successively. They remained fast asleep. He then cautiously raised himself, and Sybrandt did the same. In a moment Timothy was down again, and Sybrandt followed his example without knowing why, until he heard some one approach, and distinguished, as they came nigh, two officers, apparently of rank. They halted near the waning fire, and one said to the other in French, in a low tone :

“The beasts are all asleep; it is time to wake them. Our spies are come back, and we must march.”

“Not yet,” replied the other; “let them sleep an hour longer, and they will wake sober.” They then passed on, and, when their footsteps were no longer heard, Timothy again raised himself, signing to our hero to lie still. After ascertaining, by certain tests which experience had taught him, that the Indians still continued in a profound sleep, he proceeded with wonderful dexterity and silence to shake the priming from each of the guns in turn. After this, he took their powder-horns and emptied them; then, seizing the tomahawk of the Outawa chief which had dropped

from his hand, he stood over the Indian for a moment, with an expression of deadly hatred which Sybrandt had never before seen in his or in any other countenance. The intense desire of killing struggled a few moments with his obligations to obey the orders of Sir William : the latter at length triumphed, and, motioning Sybrandt, they crawled away with the silence and celerity with which they came ; launched their light canoe, and plied their paddles with might and main. "The morning breeze is springing up," said Timothy, "and it will soon be daylight. We must be tarnil busy."

And busy they were, and swiftly did the flimsy bark slide over the wave, leaving scarce a wake behind her. As they turned the angle which hid the encampment from their view, Timothy ventured to speak a little above his breath.

"It's lucky for us that the boat we passed coming down has returned, for it's growing light apace. I'm only sorry for one thing."

"What's that?" asked Sybrandt.

"That I let that drunken Outawa alone. If I had only bin out on my own bottom, he'd have bin stun dead in a twinkling, I guess."

"And you too, I *guess*," said Sybrandt, adopting his peculiar phraseology ; "you would have been overtaken and killed."

"Who, I? I must be a poor critter if I can't dodge half a dozen of these drunken varmints."

A few hours of sturdy exertion brought them within sight of Ticonderoga, just as the red harbingers of morning striped the pale green of the skies. Star after star disappeared, as Timothy observed, like candles

that had been burning all night and gone out of themselves; and, as they struck the foot of the high bluff whence they had departed, the rays of the sun just tipped the peaks of the high mountains toward the west. Timothy then shook hands with our hero.

"You're a hearty critter," said he, "and I'll tell Sir William how you looked at that tarnil tomahawk as if it had bin an old pipe-stem."

Without losing a moment, they proceeded to the quarters of Sir William, whom they found waiting for them with extreme anxiety. He extended both hands towards our hero, and eagerly exclaimed —

"What luck, my lads? I have been up all night, waiting your return."

"Then you will be quite likely to sleep sound to-night," quoth master Timothy, unbending the rigidity of his leathern countenance. "I am of opinion if a man wants to have a real good night's rest, he's only to set up the night before, and he may calculate upon it with sartinty."

"Hold your tongue, Timothy," said Sir William, good-humouredly, "or else speak to the purpose. Have you been at the enemy's camp?"

"Right in their very bowels," said Timothy.

Sir William proceeded to question, and Sybrandt and Timothy to answer, until he drew from them all the important information of which they had possessed themselves. He then dismissed Timothy with cordial thanks and a purse of yellow boys, which he received with much satisfaction.

"It's not of any great use to me, to be sure," said he as he departed; "but, somehow or other, I love to look at the critters."

“As to you, Sybrandt Westbrook, you have fulfilled the expectations I formed of you on our first acquaintance. You claim a higher reward; for you have acted from higher motives, and with at least equal courage and resolution. His majesty shall hear of this; and, in the mean time, call yourself Major Westbrook, for such you are from this moment. Now go with me to the Commander-in-chief, who must know of what you heard and saw.”

CHAPTER XVI.

A BUSH-FIGHT.

SYBRANDT bowed his thanks. The idea of being named with commendation to *the king* was sufficient stimulus to a modest provincial volunteer. But a greater pleasure lurked in the thought, that Catalina would hear of his honours, and perhaps regret, as Sir William had hinted, that she could no longer hope to share them. With these inspiring anticipations he accompanied Sir William to the presence of the Commander-in-chief. They found him surrounded by a number of officers, among whom our hero was startled to see Colonel Gilfillan, who had just returned from a mission to New York, whither he had been despatched by the general, the very day Sybrandt joined the army at Ticonderoga. They recognized each other with a stately bow and a flush of the cheek.

When his Excellency had heard the report of Sybrandt, and commended his intrepidity, he announced his intention to sally forth and surprise the enemy, instead of keeping his troops cooped up in their defences like cowards.

"Caution is not cowardice," observed Sir William. "It is certain that the enemy exceeds us in numbers. As to surprising them, it is sufficient to say they have two thousand Indians with them. Might I advise, sir, I would respectfully suggest that we remain here and receive the enemy in our intrenchments, where

we can keep them at bay until their Indian allies desert them, as they certainly will after being beaten back a few times. In addition to being thus weakened, the want of necessary supplies will soon oblige them to abandon the siege. When they retire, then will be the time to come out upon them: a retreating enemy is half conquered."

His Excellency, the commanding general, did not relish this wise counsel, for at least two very substantial reasons. He disdained to be governed by the advice of a *provincial officer*, and he had been brought up in the solemn conviction that one Englishman was a match for two Frenchmen by land or by water. The young officers of the line, in scarlet coats and gorgeous epaulettes, were all of the same opinion, with the exception of one, who, had he lived in happier times, and served in a sphere less obscure, would have left behind him a name equally illustrious with those of Wolfe, Montgomery, and Montcalm—that admirable soldier, whose glory even defeat could hardly obscure. It was therefore determined that the army should march out against the enemy, and orders were immediately given for that purpose. As the officers separated to their respective destinations, Sybrandt sought a meeting with Gilfillan, who favoured his wishes exceedingly.

"Colonel Gilfillan," said he, "permit me to remind you of a certain affair which still remains unsettled." The sight of Gilfillan had banished all his former pacific resolutions.

"Major Westbrook," said the other, "to-day for our country, to-morrow for Catalina."

"You remind me of a higher duty; to-morrow be

it:" and he touched his hat, and bowed with a soldier-like courtesy.

"To-morrow," replied Gilfillan, touching his hat likewise, and bowing still lower. And thus they parted for the present.

"Come, Westbrook," said Sir William, "let us go and make our wills. To-morrow, if I am not mistaken, many a poor fellow of us will have a lock of hair the less upon his head. But, never mind, death is certain, and duty imperative. I cannot approve, but to-morrow you shall see Sir William Johnson what he always has been and always will be — faithful to his country, whether his judgment go with her or no."

The whole of this busy day was spent in preparing for the departure of the army, which took place early the next morning. The shores of Lake Champlain had never before witnessed so gallant an array of martial splendours, nor the solitudes of her hills ever resounded to such a blast of rousing music as now echoed in their deepest recesses, scaring the eagles from their inaccessible eyries, and the wild deer from their impenetrable retreats. The officers of the regular army, as the native British troops were called, were all in the highest spirits, anticipating victory and promotion. But the old gray-headed provincials, who were better versed in border warfare, shook their heads and marched forth in gloomy resignation, foreseeing in this careless confidence of the general the certainty of disaster and defeat. The hot-headed redcoats tauntingly ascribed their deportment to cowardice or disaffection; but it was nothing more than the fearful augury of experience — a prophetic

insight into the future, founded on a knowledge of the past.

The march was necessarily fatiguing, owing to the obstructions every where opposed to them by the rough inequalities of a country as yet almost in a state of nature. Add to this, they were encumbered with an inconvenient and unnecessary quantity of baggage, which rendered their progress more slow and laborious. In vain did Sir William and some of the elder provincial officers endeavour to impress on the general the necessity of sending out experienced spies in advance, to scour the thick woods into which they were now penetrating; in vain did they urge the halting of the army for repose and refreshment. He was inflated with a stupid and obstinate idea that he was going to take the enemy by surprise, and, as is not uncommon in such cases, in his eagerness to gain his object, neglected the means necessary to guard against a similar disaster.

It was about the middle of a long sultry afternoon in the beginning of Summer that the army became embarrassed in passing through a tract of wet ground, covered with a forest of those majestic trees which give such sublimity to our primeval woods. The heat was intense, although they were in the midst of impervious shades; for the air was dense and stagnant, and the want of a free circulation was more than equivalent to the absence of the sun. The road, if road it might be called, which was little more than a space about thirty yards wide cleared of wood, became deeper and more difficult as they advanced, and soldiers and horses began to pant, and falter, and stick fast in the mud. At the moment when the

whole army was thus entangled, and suffering under fatigue, heat, and hunger, a horrible shout, followed by a discharge of guns in front and rear and all around them, rung in their ears, and struck a chill into the stoutest heart. White-skins and red-skins seemed, like the fabled armies we read of, to spring out of the ground; every trunk of a tree sent forth death and destruction into the beleaguered host, and unseen hands pointed in security their fatal guns. Here was no wheeling to the right or to the left, or forming of columns, or concentrating of battalions, or any of the practised evolutions of European warfare. Each man had his individual foe, and each man fought his own mortal fight.

The moment the yell echoed through the forest, Sir William exclaimed to Sybrandt, who was marching at his side, weary and disheartened,

“There they are! I thought as much. The head-long blockhead!”

“Your commands, Sir William!” eagerly returned the other.

“Commands! Nobody commands now, but the great Leader of the hosts of heaven. The law of nature is come again, and all are equal here. — Every man for himself, and God for us all!” shouted he, in a voice that echoed through the forest, as he drew a pistol and dashed, as fast as the woods and marshes would permit, in the direction of the wildest turmoil. Sybrandt followed, or rather kept at his side. But there was no enemy to be seen, though every instant the officers, in their red coats and splendid embroidery, fell dead by invisible hands.

“We are fighting with shadows,” said Sir William,

as the balls and tomahawks flew about, barking the trees or entering the flesh of the devoted men falling victims to the folly of their commander.

By degrees, parties of the Five Nations rallied round their old leader, and Sir William soon saw himself at the head of a considerable number. With these he commenced operations in the regular style of bush-fighting, to which all other modes of warfare are mere children's play. Each man then depends on his own skill, sagacity, and daring; each man concentrates his soul and body in efforts for self-preservation alone, and the impulse of glory is changed to the instinct of love for life. The fight soon became equal between the assailing Indians and Sir William and his valiant Mohawks, who still continued the objects of terror to all the savages from the Atlantic to the shores of Lake Superior. Old King Hendrick, who was with them, retained his courage and vigour, and seconded his friend Sir William with all his might and cunning. Nor was Sybrandt idle. He fought on foot, as all the rest now fought, either from choice or necessity; and, as the obstructions of the ground prevented acting in concert, he was frequently engaged in personal contests with the enemy. But the Indians never, if they can help it, or unless under circumstances of particular advantage, like to match their physical powers with the white man, either because they know their own advantage in the manœuvres of bush-fighting, or the superiority of the other in vigour and perseverance.

It so happened, however, that Sybrandt, who had now received two or three flesh-wounds which had somewhat weakened him, in the devious vicissitudes

of the fight encountered an Indian, who seemed the chief, or one of the principal leaders, of the hostile band. He wore a suit of buckskin fitting close to his body, and a military cap with feathers. He had a tomahawk in his hand, which seemed to be his only weapon. The sole defence of Sybrandt was a loaded pistol, with (what was very rare at that time) a double barrel. It was one of a pair which constituted the only inheritance he received from his father. With guarded malice the Indian and the white man eyed each other; the former keenly scrutinizing the latter to ascertain his means of defence, and Sybrandt evincing equal curiosity. The chief was at length satisfied that Sybrandt was unarmed, he having, at first sight of the savage, concealed the pistol for the purpose of disarming his vigilance. He accordingly approached our hero with tomahawk raised, still however with the characteristic caution of his race, until Sybrandt thought him sufficiently near, when he discharged one barrel, but not with a true aim. The ball just grazed his adversary's shoulder. The chief, supposing him now at his mercy, rushed forward, but was received with a shot from the other barrel. It entered his heart, and he fell dead.

"Bravo!" exclaimed Sir William, who just at that moment made his appearance, covered with blood and dirt. "Bravo, major, you have done good service. That is the very head and soul of the hostile Indians. The moment they miss him they will disperse. The feat shall make you a colonel, if we survive this day."

And it happened as he had predicted. By degrees the Indians remitted their attacks, and, as the news of the death of their great chief was gravely whispered

about, discontinued them entirely, and gradually disappeared.

"The battle is over in this quarter," said the knight, and called his Mohawks to follow him towards where the firing still continued. Here they found a scene of confusion and carnage, principally on one side. The British army had been taken at such disadvantage, and knew so little of this mode of warfare, that their efforts were entirely inefficient. The provincials, however, made some effectual resistance, and, when reinforced by Sir William and his Mohawks, were at length able to repulse the enemy, who retired in perfect order, and with scarcely any loss. In passing thus from one extremity of the fight to the other, Sybrandt, by reason of the obscurity of the wood, became separated from his companions. While seeking the direction for joining them again, he heard something like a faint halloo at a little distance. After a moment's reflection he made his way towards the sound with the wariness becoming his situation, until, at length, peering about beneath the branches, he discovered an officer lying at the foot of a tree, with his body partly raised and resting against it. At a little distance was an Indian grasping a knife, cautiously advancing, with an evident intention to practise upon him the bloody rite of savage barbarity. The face of the officer was turned towards Sybrandt, and, pale as it was, he at once recognised Gilfillan. In an instant the history of the past rushed upon his mind, and in an instant he lived over his former anger, regrets, and disappointments. All these were merged the next moment in one generous feeling. He determined to rescue his rival at every risk. Lev-

elling his pistol with a steady aim, he waited the approach of the savage, who was so intent upon his bloody purpose that he did not perceive him. When about half a dozen paces from his intended victim, Sybrandt fired, and the Indian dropped. In another second he was at the side of Gilfillan, who held out his hand to him, and said, faintly,

“Major Westbrook, I thank you;—not for my life, for that is gone past all recovery, I think; but you have saved my skin from being ripped from my head; and, by my soul, I am grateful. I have something to say to you; and the sooner I can say it the better.”

At this moment Sybrandt perceived a second Indian approaching with uplifted tomahawk. He attempted to rise and meet him, but he had been bleeding imperceptibly for several hours, and his strength was now quite gone. He sunk down again, insensible, at the instant that he heard the report of a gun, and the exclamation, “Take that, you tarnil critter.”

CHAPTER XVII.

AN EXPLANATION.

THIS was a bloody day for England and her colonies, and its consequences fatal to the success of their combined arms during the remainder of the war. The shattered remnant of the army found its way back to Ticonderoga, weaker by two thousand men than it went out. But, fortunately, the French did not pursue, owing to the defection of their Indian allies; they being, as usual, discouraged by their losses, which had been great, owing to the bravery and conduct of Sir William Johnson and his Mohawks. They employed themselves in running about the wood where the battle was fought, plundering the slain, and inflicting the last act of barbarity upon those in whom life remained. Many a gallant soldier fell in this forest-fight, who deserved a more illustrious field and a more worthy commemoration than mine. Among these was Lord Howe, of whom the records of the time speak as of one whose high honour, signal courage, and martial qualities gave promise of a life of glory and success. But what are the auguries of hope, even when drawn from such appearances as these, but the heralds of disappointment?

For some hours there was a blank in the life of our hero; and that the blank did not last for ever was owing to his trusty companion of the night but one before. Timothy Weasel had joined the army that

day as a volunteer, or rather amateur, and long afterward boasted that he had sacrificed one of the critters to the shade of each of his murdered family. After rescuing Sybrandt and Gilfillan from the savage, in the manner just related, he came up to the young men, the former of whom he found insensible. He examined his wounds, of which his long experience in the trade of vengeance had made him no indifferent judge.

"Is he dead?" asked Gilfillan, faintly.

"Only in a swoond," replied Timothy; "the blood is almost out of his body, and that's mostly what's the matter with him. It's a pity he should die of nothing, as I may say; for I can tell you he's a decent sort of a critter—he isn't afeard of nothin'."

"I know that—I owe him my rescue from the scalping-knife, and I would give what remains of life, if it were a thousand times as much, to save him. Can't it be done?"

Timothy considered a moment. "It's likely it may. Stay here till I come back, and, mind, don't neither of you stir a peg from the place."

"There's no danger of that," answered Gilfillan, with a melancholy smile, glancing his languid eye from his broken leg to the inanimate body of Sybrandt.

Timothy hurried away, leaving the two young men to await his return. He staid till the shadows of evening began to fall, and Gilfillan, worn out with pain, anxiety, and weakness, had sunk down by the side of our hero. In this situation they were found by Sir William, who had been apprized by Timothy of their melancholy state. He lost not a moment,

but came, under the guidance of the Vermonter, with a body of his Mohawks to their relief. In a few minutes they made a litter of boughs, on which they placed the two wounded soldiers, and forthwith bent their way as fast as possible towards Ticonderoga. The motion of the litter put into circulation the little blood that yet lingered in Sybrandt's veins, and brought him by degrees to a consciousness of his situation. Gilfillan also came to himself betimes. It was morning before the party arrived at the intrenched camp: the cold dews of the night had operated on the exhausted frames of the young soldiers, and chilled them almost into ice; so that when they arrived it was a moot point whether they were dead or alive. Immediate care was taken to dispose of them as comfortably as possible, and the assistance of surgeons obtained.

The wounds of Sybrandt were found in no way dangerous of themselves; but it was feared that loss of blood, and exposure to the night air, might be followed by consequences that would endanger his life. The situation of Gilfillan was still more critical. A ball had struck his knee, and shattered it in a terrible manner. The surgeons at once pronounced the necessity of amputation the next day, when his strength was a little restored. A groan, such as his previous sufferings had never forced from him, marked the feeling with which the handsome Gilfillan received this judgment; but he uttered not a word. They were in the same room together, at the request of Gilfillan, who lay awake that night, restless and feverish. Sybrandt was also so much exhausted that he could scarcely sleep; and ever and anon he could hear Gil-

fillan mumbling to himself in tones of feverish indistinctness, — “They sha’n’t make a sight of me.” — “What’s the use of paying such a price for life?” — “What will the girls say to my wooden leg?” — and such like exclamations.

About daylight in the morning, he asked Sybrandt if he was awake, and, finding that he was, spoke to him as follows :

“Westbrook, I have something to say to you ; and perhaps I’d better say it now, for, upon my soul, I think, nay, I’m sure, it’s all over with me.”

“Be of good cheer, Colonel Gilfillan,” replied the other ; “after the operation you’ll be better.”

“And, by the glory of my ancestors, Westbrook, if I’m not better before that happens, I shall never be better. I mean to die with both my legs on.”

“Surely, you are not afraid of an amputation?”

“Afraid!” cried Gilfillan, raising himself in his bed — “Look you, Major Westbrook, if I had a pair of pistols here just now — but what am I talking about? don’t I owe my life, at least what’s left of it, to you? Now, listen to me, and mind what I say.” He then disclosed to him the true history of the picture, and his rejection by Catalina the day he was seen by Sybrandt at the feet of that young lady, kissing her hands. “She loves you,” said he, faintly, “and none other. She told me so with her own sweet lips, and the tears in her truth-telling eyes.”

“Is this true, on your soul, Colonel Gilfillan?”

“True, on the word of a dying man. Now let us be friends while I live ; and, faith, there will be little time for our friendship to wear out.”

When the surgeons visited the young men in the

morning, they found Sybrandt somewhat better, though feverish: but they shook their heads when they examined the wound and felt the pulse of Gilfillan, declaring that nothing but an immediate amputation could save him.

"Then I am a dead man," said he; "for my leg shall go with me to the grave. We have kept company all our lives, and I won't part with my old friend now, at the last pinch. Any thing else, doctor?"

"Any thing else will be nothing — you will be dead in less than four-and-twenty hours; and, indeed, it is extremely doubtful whether even that will save you."

"Then the matter is settled," said Gilfillan.

"Then you are a dead man," replied the surgeon, bluntly.

"Be it so," was Gilfillan's reply.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE BURIAL OF A GALLANT SOLDIER.

ALL that day, and until the next morning, Gilfillan was at times delirious with pain and fever; but towards the evening he came to himself, was entirely free from pain, and addressed Sybrandt coherently.

“ You feel better ? ” said Sybrandt, hopefully.

“ I feel no pain now.”

“ Then you must be better.”

“ I *am* better — my sufferings are past — by sunset I shall be well.”

Sybrandt understood him, and did not reply. After a silence of a few minutes, Gilfillan spoke again.

“ Westbrook,” said he, faintly, “ can you lift me that little trunk on the table ? ”

“ I cannot stand,” said the other.

“ Perhaps *I* can get it ; ” and with an effort he raised himself, and managed to reach it, unaided, though he almost sunk under the exertion. The attendant came in at that moment, to expostulate against his talking.

“ Pooh ! ” said Gilfillan ; “ go about your business, will you ? But stay ; I want you to bear witness that I charge Major Westbrook with this trunk. As to the rest, I don’t care who has it. Now go away.” The attendant retired.

“ Westbrook,” continued he, after a pause, “ there is a picture in this trunk which belongs to you. I procured it like a rogue, and I restore it like an hon-

est man, now that it can be of no further use to me. There are some little keepsakes of my sister, who married and died in France. Give them to Catalina; she need not be afraid of my claiming them when I am dead. My watch you will take the first opportunity of sending home to my father. I can't write to him—but you will do it. Say to him that I blessed his old gray head, and died a true son of my father and of old Ireland. There is a seal attached to it, with my crest—the crest of the ancient Connaught kings; wear that for my sake, and—”

Here his ideas seemed to become indistinct; at least Sybrandt could not understand what he said, for a minute or two.

“Westbrook,” whispered he, “I am going.”

“Shall I call assistance?”

“No; but I wish I could reach your hand, to give it one shake. No matter—we are friends. God bless you—my father—Catalina—Old Ireland!”

The last words were almost unheard by Sybrandt, and in a little while another soul was on its way to that country which all visit in turn; of which none know any thing, but the dead, who “tell no tales.”

Gilfillan was buried with the honours of war,—one of the most solemn and affecting ceremonies that can be offered to our contemplation. The scene and the occasion combined to render it peculiarly striking and magnificent. The remnant of the army followed his remains to the grave with arms reversed and muffled drums, while the concentrated bands poured forth the rich and tender music of “Aileen Aroon,” the favourite air of the dead soldier. The minute-guns roared among the recesses of the mountains, and echoed

along the lake, as the ceremony proceeded; and three rounds of musketry announced that the body of the gallant Gilfillan was deposited in the bosom of its mother earth.

"It is over!" exclaimed Sybrandt, who had lain stretched on his bed, listening to the strain of music and the roaring artillery. "He is gone, poor fellow! Perhaps I shall soon follow." The thought was not pleasant; for he felt now that he had something to live for.

The French army had been prevented from immediately following up its victory—for such it was, in fact—by the disaffection and insubordination of the Indians, who formed an indispensable ingredient in these border wars. They had suffered severely, gained little plunder, and become tired of the service; for perseverance in war forms no part of their character. It was with difficulty they could be kept together; and this circumstance afforded a respite to the English force, which, reduced as it now was, took the opportunity to retreat to the head of Lake George.

During this period, the situation of Sybrandt continued very critical. His wounds were of little consequence; but the circumstances attending his removal from the field, together with the subsequent agitation of his mind occasioned by the explanation with Gilfillan, brought on a slow fever, which threatened fatal consequences. Such was his weakness, that, though his friend Sir William paid the kindest attention to his ease and comfort, he scarcely survived his removal by water to Fort George, and was brought there in a state that rendered recovery almost hopeless.

In the mean time Catalina had returned to the

house of her father; but not the Catalina who had left it the autumn before. After the departure of Sybrandt, Gilfillan, and Sir Thicknesse Throgmorton, she had nothing to gratify either her affection or her vanity. The resources of dissipation and flirtation, so frequently successful in curing the wounds of the heart, all failed her. Nothing was talked of or thought of but the war; business and gayety were at a stand; and the officers, whose presence had given a zest to balls, parties, and general society, were gone to the frontier. She had, therefore, ample leisure for reflection and regret. Though she blamed Sybrandt for not entering into the very recesses of her heart, and seeing himself there struggling for mastery with a little troop of vanities and caprices, still she could not in conscience deny that he had at least sufficient apparent cause for his desertion; and thus to the disappointment of her hopes was added the sting of self-reproach. Her vivacity departed; her colour faded; and the richness of her form, where youth and health had united — with a happy consciousness of the present, a sanguine anticipation of the future — to consummate the face and figure of a Hebe, gave place to lassitude and indifference. To this succeeded a fretful impatience to go home, which was met by an equal though secret desire on the part of Mrs. Aubineau to be rid of her. That good lady never, to the last day of her life, forgave Catalina her folly in not jumping at the opportunity of becoming a titled lady.

In this state of things the summons of Colonel Vancour for his daughter to return home was a relief equally welcome to Catalina and her lady entertainer. The guest who is tired of the hostess and the hostess

tired of her guest are remarkably civil at parting. Nothing could surpass the affectionate farewell of Mrs. Aubineau, except the grateful acknowledgments of Catalina. Let not our stern moral readers — (for the sternest moralists now regularly put on their spectacles to read a new novel) — let them not cast the bitterness of their censures upon this elegant simulation. What would this world be, and who would or could live in it, if every-body blurted out the secret feelings of their hearts in each other's faces? Neither friendship, nor love, nor the ties of kindred, let them be ever so strongly knit, could stand such a test. They would perish and be rent in twain by the rough application of such a touchstone. Civility to those who have not degraded themselves by base and dishonourable conduct, but whom still we neither respect nor love, when it proceeds from no motive of interest or purpose of deception, is not so much actual hypocrisy as the triumph of reflection and propriety over the impulses of prejudice and ill-nature.

CHAPTER XIX.

CATALINA RETURNS HOME.

CATALINA embarked in one of those Albany packets which then constituted the only vehicles of transportation on the noble Hudson, under the protection of the wife of an officer occupying a high station on the frontier. The scene and the season were scarcely more different from those which presented themselves on her journey down the river, than were her feelings and anticipations at the two periods. But the changes, though great, bore no resemblance to each other. They formed a perfect contrast. Then the hopes of Catalina were blossoming in full luxuriance, while the beauties and the flowers of nature were passing into the gay yet melancholy hues of the departing year. Now the young and fresh products of the genial spring, the air, the woods, the birds, the insects, the voices and the face of earth, all breathed, and whispered, and sung, of joyful, renovated animation. Not so with Catalina. She represented not the smiling, blushing, full luxuriance of spring's rosy-lipped goddess, but the faded, and still fading charms of autumn's melancholy, musing, silent representative.

The vessel sped prosperously before the sweet south winds, but, sad to say, was four days on her passage. What a loss of time!—especially for people that have nothing to do. Had our heroine fortunately been born in this age of development—even

in this behindhand hemisphere — she might have been home in twelve hours! But if she had been still more distinguished by Providence, and had been born, not only in this happy age, but in such a happy country as Old England, she might peradventure have travelled to Albany on a railroad, at the rate of sixty miles an hour! What a prodigious saving of time! And, if the business of young ladies consisted in saving time, what a prodigious advantage in this rapid travelling! — I beg pardon, the march of improvement has ordained I should say locomotion — she actually might have arrived at home in less than three hours!

“Well, sir, and what if she had?”

Why, sir, she would have saved such an amazing deal of time! She would have got home three days sooner to her friends.

“And missed the anticipation of seeing them, all that time.”

Pooh! what is anticipation compared to the reality?

“Ask any old lady or gentleman you meet, and they will tell you.”

My dear sir, then the short and the long of the matter is, you don't think fast travelling an improvement.

“Faith, not I. I believe, if the happiness, or the interests, or the superiority of man, had in any way depended on fast travelling, Providence would have made a race-horse of him, or furnished his honour with a pair of eagle's wings.”

My good sir, you are a century behind the spirit of the age.

“Never mind; one of these days I shall get into a locomotive engine, and overtake it.”

So Catalina, poor girl, was upwards of four days in sailing to Albany. Does not the fair reader, who, possibly, at the moment of reading this, sits at a window with our book in her hand, looking at the whiskered beaux as they pass up and down Broadway — does she not shudder at this dead loss of time? Perhaps she is anticipating a visit to the Springs, to Long Branch, or Nahant, and grows pale at the very anticipation of a four days' passage, involving four days of absence from these happy retreats of people whose time is so precious. Let us see what privations this delay involves. The loss of at least forty-eight tumblers of Congress water; of four execrable dinners; of four restless, uncomfortable nights; a subscription ball; three dozen changes of dress; and three hundred and seventy-five desperate yawns; — at the Springs: — of four or five bathings on the beach, followed by four or five shiverings when the sea-breeze comes in; of the pleasure of seeing the ladies make their transits to and fro from the waves, looking, not like the fabled goddess rising from the ocean, but, with reverence be it spoken, like old-clothes-women when they go in and drowned rats when they come out; of spending day after day in a delightful variety of eating, drinking, and sleeping — sleeping, eating, and drinking — and drinking, eating, and sleeping; of being obliged to devour your dinners quicker than they do in a manufactory or a steam-boat, and discuss crabs and tough mutton against time — to sleep before dinner, and after dinner, and between dinner and tea — and, finally, to endure the exemplary tyranny of Mrs. Sears, and suffer under the worst of all despotisms, that of a petticoat government; — at Long Branch: — or, of

the gratification of passing all day watching for the sea-serpent; of magnifying every porpoise into his likeness; of seeing the rippings of the waves assume the likeness of his joints; and of exercising the last degree of human credulity in believing in the existence of that fabled monster, under the penalty of being frowned on by the young ladies, and denounced by their honoured fathers as freemasons, Jackson men, and unbelievers;—at Nahant. To think that a young lady or gentleman of enlightened views and cultivated intellect should lose four days of all or any of these delights for lack of a steam-boat or locomotive is enough to discompose the machinery of a one-hundred-and-twenty-horse-power engine. Yet to all this was Catalina subjected, without being a whit the wiser or more miserable on that account.

However, in spite of the backwardness of the age, she got home at last. *Festina lente*, said Augustus Cæsar, and so say I. Nobody ever did any thing well in a hurry, except running away. She was greeted by her honoured parents with tender welcome, and she received that welcome with tears flowing from a hundred recollections of the past. The first caresses being over, they had leisure to observe her altered appearance, which they did with a silent interchange of anxious looks. They however said nothing; they suspected its cause, and this was not the time or the occasion to allude to the subject. But honest Ariel, who was on the high ropes with joy at her return, and never wandered out of the little circle of the present moment, being suddenly struck with her paleness, as suddenly exclaimed,

“Why, Catalina—why, damn it, what’s the matter? You look like a ghost!”

"Nothing, uncle," answered she, and burst into tears.

"Why, damn it now, why, don't cry; I didn't mean to—to—" and honest Ariel, whose heart melted like a dish of butter in the sun, fairly wept, to keep her company.

"She is fatigued with her voyage," said the considerate mother, "and had better lie down a little while before dinner. Come, my dear:" and Catalina followed her mother to her chamber.

"I'll be shot if I know what to make of all this," exclaimed Ariel, wiping his eyes.

"Nor I," thought the colonel; "but we shall know in good time. Her mother will get it all out of her before to-morrow."

And so she did. The fact is, she knew it all before, from her friend, Mrs. Aubineau. But she had no objection to hear it again; for, thought she, a good story never loses by telling.

"Ah! Catalina," exclaimed she, shaking her head, "you'll never live to be a titled lady, I'm afraid."

"I shall never live to be any thing, I believe," replied Catalina, and her tears flowed apace.

"The *Honourable* Colonel Gilfillan," said Madam, "is, I believe, on the frontier."

"I wish," thought Catalina, "he were anywhere, so I might never see his face again."

"And Sybrandt Westbrook is there, too."

Catalina did not wish *he* was where she might never see him again, though the old lady, I believe, did.

"He is a jealous-pated fool," said Madam.

"Who, dear mother?"

"Sybrandt."

"Indeed, mother, you are mistaken," said she, firmly.

"Then you gave him cause," said Madam, in a tone rather of exultation.

"Indeed, I did not — that is, if he had known my real feelings he would have been satisfied."

"Ah!" thought the mother, "it's an old story for girls to behave like little wild-cats to their lovers, and then blame them because they cannot see into their hearts. They might as well try to see into the inside of" — she could not find a comparison to suit her, exactly, but I believe a pumpkin came into her head.

Madam told the old gentleman all about it, and immediately after went to Albany, for a purpose that nobody about her could fathom, though I have a shrewd guess. But I will not betray the secrets of the old lady, though, rest her soul, she is dead long ago, and I am not afraid of ghosts. All I can disclose is, that, some days after this mysterious journey, the affair of Catalina was talked of at several tea-parties, though nobody could ever discover how it leaked out.

"I shall write to Sybrandt, and set matters right," quoth the straightforward old gentleman, Colonel Vancour.

"What!" screamed Madam — "What!" cried Catalina; "and tell I am *dying* for him! O, father, I'd rather be dead!"

"I'd rather see her — married to the Honourable Colonel Gilfillan," thought the old lady.

"It can be no reproach to the delicacy of a young lady, to relieve her lover from any erroneous impressions of her conduct. You know he loved you, and that is sufficient."

"But, father, he may have fallen in love with somebody else, since."

"O, certainly," exclaimed the colonel, smiling, — "with some beautiful squaw."

"Alas! men have no sensibility," thought Catalina, with a sigh, "when my father makes a jest of the soul-subduing passion!"

People grow wiser as they grow older, my dear little heroine, or at any rate they grow more selfish, and that is often mistaken for wisdom. Times change, and men change with them; but this does not prove that either change for the better.

Catalina opposed writing to Sybrandt, and so did her mother, although she could not help feeling anxious about the depressed health and spirits of her daughter. "Nobody ever died of love, though," thought she; and she thought right. It is not a disease in itself, but it often produces complaints that sap the sources of life, and bring on a premature decay. The process is slow, but sure. Be this as it may, the colonel had two to one against him, and they were women. The colonel was but a man — so he grumbled, and submitted. What could man do more?

CHAPTER XX.

AN ANTI-CHARITABLE CHAPTER.

I COULD never yet, to this blessed hour, satisfy myself whether Catalina was more glad or more sorry at thus carrying her point. At any rate it was one of Pyrrhus's victories, and she never wished to gain such another. She was now free to indulge the luxury of grief; but grief, like other passions, when immoderately gratified, soon loses zest. It is one of the most tiresome things in the world, for a constancy. It does very well for a burst or a paroxysm; but for every day, and all day long—for every night, and all the live-long night—human nature cannot stand it, and seeks refuge from the carking, gnawing fiend, in the performance of its duties to itself and to others. Blessed necessity!

Catalina forced herself to enter upon the cares of domestic life; and those who seek employment will soon take an interest in what they are doing. There are a thousand little acts of obligation, or kindness, or attention, which woman, and only woman, can perform, and which interfere neither with the delicacy of a lady nor the acquirement and practice of elegant accomplishments. The union, I confess, is not common; but I have seen women, and thank heaven for it, who united both the will and the power to be useful with the utmost polish of mind and manners and the highest intellectual attainments becoming the sex. I

wish I could meet a few more of them. But, if they were common, they would no longer be a rarity; and, if they were no longer a rarity, nobody would prize them. Doubtless it is best as it is. Let us bow with humble resignation, and thank our stars, as men, that there are so many of the sex who are not all angel; for, if there were more of them quite faultless, where under the sun should we find partners worthy of them?

Catalina was calculated to be both a blessing and an ornament to her home, a jewel in the bosom of a husband, or she would never have been chosen as our heroine from all the rest of her sex. Though not perfect, she was a perfect woman; and whoever is not satisfied with that, let him die the death of a bachelor. There was a library too in the mansion of Colonel Vancour, which, though principally composed of majestic Latin tomes of the Dutch school, was here and there relieved by works of a lighter nature. There were few novels, but, being scarce, they were the more seducing, and, being right excellent, they would bear to be read frequently. They did not depend altogether on the momentary excitement of the story, but possessed latent beauties which gradually opened themselves, like flowers to the morning sun, at every new perusal. Besides these, Catalina had music and friends, and the liberality of her father allowed her the means of procuring every rational enjoyment.

What a shame to be unhappy with so many sources of happiness! Yet our heroine was not happy. There was one thing wanting, and that was a want of the heart. It was the companion of her childhood; the

choice of her youth; the preserver of her life. She often visited the spot where the terrible conflict with Captain Pipe took place, and always returned with renewed regrets; she could not sit at her window and look into the garden without recalling to mind the perils she had encountered, and the life she owed to the watchful tenderness of her lover; nor could she walk in any direction without something or other presenting itself which brought him to her remembrance clothed with every claim to her tenderness and gratitude. But she had lost him, and that by her own paltry vanity.

Yet she did not yield to the infirmity of her heart. She tried every resource, and finally that of teaching children to read and write. During her absence in New York, Madam Vancour had been seized with a passion for doing good on a great scale — a dangerous propensity in woman, because it is apt to degenerate into the weakness of indiscriminate charity. To relieve the distresses of mankind without encouraging their vices, their laziness, their extravagance, is a nice and delicate task; it requires a knowledge of the dark side of the world and a self-denial which women happily seldom attain; and hence it is that the large share they have taken of late in the distribution of public and private charities has without doubt been one of the main causes of that vast increase of idleness and poverty, and their consequent vices, which cannot but be evident to every observer.

With the best intentions in the world, mingled, as such so often are, with a little alloy of vanity and self-applause, Madam Vancour resolved to institute a school for the gratuitous education of the children

of the neighbouring poor. Not that there were any people in the neighbourhood that really required her assistance in this respect; for riches and poverty were not at that early period so disproportionately distributed as they are at present. Though all were able by industry and economy to afford their children such instruction as was necessary to their modes of life, (and all beyond is not only superfluous, but pernicious), still this new-born desire to do good whispered Madam Vancour that it would be very humane to relieve these people from the burden of educating their own offspring. Accordingly she set about it with enthusiasm; and her first step was to convince these worthy folks, who had hitherto managed to get on very well, that it was a great hardship for them to be obliged to deprive themselves of certain of the little luxuries of life, to pay for the schooling of their children.

“Vat! mine own lawfully-pegotten shildren?” exclaimed old Van Bombeler, who got his living by making flag-bottomed chairs; “why, who den should pay for dare shchooling, if not me? Ain’t I dare fader?”

But Madam Vancour soon brought him to reason, by showing how he could buy six quarts of pure Jamaica rum, and as many pounds of sugar, besides a new gown for the *yffrouw*, with the money it cost him for the schooling of his three children. “Duyvel!” quoth Van Bombeler; “why, I never tought of dat before!” So he consented to Madam’s desirable proposal. In this manner the good lady—for good she certainly was in the abstract, though I fear not practically so in this instance—in this manner did she

persuade her neighbours to relinquish the honest, nay, proud gratification of educating their own children by the sweat of their own brows. There was one, and only one, sturdy Dutchman, who rejected her benevolence, and insisted, nay, swore, that nobody should put their charity upon him. "I'll work my fingers to de bone; and den, if I can't send dem to shchool, what's de reason, I should like to know, if dey can't pay for dare own shchooling when dey grow pig enough?" But Madam had her revenge—she took away his trade of whisk-brooms, by setting up another man in the business; who, as he lived in one of Colonel Vancour's small houses and paid no rent, ruined the other by underselling him. By this means the obstinate fool was brought to reason; and, finally, his poverty if not his will consented to have his children educated upon charity.

But these difficulties in procuring objects for the exercise of her new-born virtue soon vanished. Custom by degrees reconciled the people to the degradation of depending on alms for what they could procure by their own labour. The numerous examples which in good time presented themselves; the countenance of Madam, to whom they all looked up with respectful deference; and, above all, the means of self-gratification which this diversion of the fruits of their labour produced; all tended to consummate this salutary revolution of opinion. It was surprising to see, in the course of a little while, how anxious the poor were to get rid of the burden of educating their children; and with what singular satisfaction Master Van Bombeler boasted that he could now afford to drink twice as much as he did before this blessed

invention of charity. In a little time a great improvement was observed at the Flats: the children all looked up to Madam Vancour instead of their ignorant parents, who, for their part, began to wear clothes of a better fashion; to spend a little more time abroad and a little less at home; to take a great interest in all matters that did not concern them; and to elevate their noses much higher in the scale of creation—now that they began to see into the natural and indefeasible claim which every-body's children had to be educated by any body, just as it pleased God. But the most salutary consequence was, that the fathers and mothers began gradually to take less interest in their offspring, conceiving them to belong altogether to society; and, by leaving them in a great degree to the care of others, happily relieved them from the contagion of their bad example.

CHAPTER XXI.

PLINY THE YOUNGER.

MADAM VANCOUR was extremely fortunate in procuring a most efficient auxiliary in the engineering of this her good work, in the person of Master Pliny Coffin (the sixteenth), whilom of Nantucket island. Pliny was the youngest of nine sons and an unaccountable number of daughters, born unto Captain Pliny Coffin (the fifteenth). Being called after his uncle, Deacon Pliny Mayhew (the tenth), he was patronised by that worthy "Spermaceti candle of the church," as he was called, and sent to school at an early age, with a view to following in the footsteps of the famous divine. But Pliny the younger had a natural and irresistible vocation to salt water, inso-much that, at the age of eighteen months or thereabouts, being left to amuse himself under the only tree in Nantucket, which grew in front of Captain Coffin's (the fifteenth) house, he crawled incontinently down to the sea-side, and was found disporting himself in the surf like unto a young gosling. In like manner did Pliny the younger, at a very early age, display a vehement predilection for great whales, to the which he was most probably incited by the stories of his father, Pliny the elder, who had been a mighty harpooner in his day. When about three years old, one of these monsters of the deep was driven ashore in a storm, at Nantucket, where he perished, to the

great joy of the inhabitants, who flocked from all parts to claim a share of his spoil. On the morning of that memorable day, which is still recorded in the annals of Nantucket, Pliny the younger was missing, and, diligent search being made for him, he was not to be found in the whole island; to the grief of his mother, who was a very stout woman, and had killed three Indians with her own fair hand. But, look ye, while the people were gathered about the body of the whale, discussing the mysterious disappearance of the child, what was their astonishment to behold him coming forth from the stomach of the huge fish, laughing right merrily at the prank he had played!

But the truth must be confessed; he took his learning after the manner that people, more especially doctors, take physic, — with many wry faces and much tribulation of spirit. In fact he never learned a lesson in his whole life, until, on arriving at his fifth year, by good fortune a primer was put into his hand wherein was the picture of a whale, with the which he was so utterly delighted that he mastered the whole distich under it in the course of the day. The teacher aptly took the hint, and, by means of pasting the likeness of a whale at the head of his lessons, carried him famously along in the career of knowledge. In process of time he came to be of the order of deacons, and was appointed to preach his first sermon, whereby a great calamity befell him, which drove him forth a wanderer on the face of the earth. Unfortunately, the meeting-house where he was to make his first essay stood in full view of the sea, which was distinctly visible from the pulpit; and, just as Pliny the younger had divided his text into

sixteen parts, behold! a mighty ship appeared, with a bone in her teeth, ploughing her way towards the island with clouds of canvas swelling in the wind. Whereupon the conviction came across his mind that this must be the Albatross, returning from a whaling voyage in the great South Sea; and, sad to relate, his boyish instincts got the better of his better self. Delirious with eager curiosity, he rushed from the pulpit, and ran violently down to the sea-side like one possessed, leaving deacon Mayhew and the rest of the expectant congregation astonished nigh on to dismay. The deacon was wroth, and forthwith disinherited him. The people said he was possessed of a devil, and talked of putting him to the ordeal; whereupon the unfortunate youth exiled himself from the land of his nativity, and went to seek his fortune among the heathen, who had steeples to their churches, and dealt in the abomination of white sleeves. Of his wanderings, and of the accidents of his pilgrimage, I know nothing, until his stars directed him to the Flats, where there were no salt-water temptations to mislead him.

As one of the contemplated improvements of Madam Vancour was the introduction of the English language among her pupils, instead of the barbarous Dutch dialect, she eagerly caught at the first offer of Pliny, and engaged him forthwith to take charge of her seminary. In this situation he was found by Catalina, who, as we have before stated, in the desolation of her spirit, resolved to attempt the relief of her depression by entering upon the difficult task of being useful to others. She accordingly occasionally associated herself with Master Pliny in the labours of

his mission, greatly to the consolation of his inward man. He took great pains to initiate her into the mysteries of his new philosophical, practical, elementary, and scientific system of education, on which he prided himself exceedingly, and with justice, for it hath been lately revised and administered among us with singular success, by divers ungenerous pedagogues, who have not had the conscience to acknowledge whence it was derived.

As Newton took the hint of the theory of gravitation from seeing an apple fall to the ground, and as the illustrious Marquis of Worcester deduced the first idea of the application of steam from the risings and sinkings of a pot-lid, so did Master Pliny model and graduate his whole system of education from the incident of the whale in the primer. Remembering with what eagerness he had himself been attracted towards learning by a picture, he resolved to make similar illustrations the great means of drawing forth what he called the "latent energies of the infant genius, spurring on the march of intellect, and accelerating the development of mind." But, as woodcuts were scarce articles in those times, he devoted one day in the week to sallying forth with all his scholars, in order to collect materials for their studies; that is, to gather acorns, pebbles, leaves, briers, bugs, ants, caterpillars, and what not. When he wanted an urchin to spell "Bug," he placed one of these specimens directly above the word, and great was his exultation at seeing how the child was assisted in cementing B-U-G together, by the presence of the creature itself. In this way he taught every thing by sensible objects, boasting at the same time of the

originality of his method, little suspecting that he had only got hold of the fag end of Chinese emblems and Egyptian hieroglyphics. But, pride will have a fall. One day, at Catalina's suggestion, master Pliny put his scholars to the test, by setting them to spell without the aid of sensible objects, and by the mere instrumentality of the letters. They made sad work of it; hardly one could spell "ant" without the presence of the insect to act as a prompter. They had become so accustomed to the assistance of the *thing*, that they paid little or no attention to the letters which represented it; and Catalina ventured to hint to master Pliny, that the children had learned little or nothing. They knew what an ant was, before, and that seemed to be the extent of their knowledge, now. "Yea," answered he, "but it makes the acquisition of learning so easy."

"To the teacher, certainly," replied the young lady. In fact, when she came to analyze the improvements in master Pliny's system, she found that they all tended to one point, namely, diminishing, not the labour of the scholar in learning, but that of the master in teaching.

I forbear to touch on all the other various plans of master Pliny for accelerating the march of mind. Suffice it to say, they were all, one after another, abandoned, being found desperately out at the elbows when subjected to the test of wear and tear. Yet have they been revived with wonderful success by divers illustrious and philosophical pedagogues abroad and at home, who have brought the system to such perfection, that they have not the least trouble in teaching, nor the children any thing but downright

pleasure in learning. Happy age!, and happy Pliny, had he lived to this day to behold the lamp which he lighted shining over the whole universe. He, however, abandoned his system at the instance of a silly girl, and soon after deserted the Flats; the same cause being at the bottom of both issues — a woman.

The evil spirit which influenced master Pliny to run out of the pulpit now prompted him to run his head into the fire. Pliny was a rosy-cheeked, curly-headed, fresh-looking man, exceedingly admired by the Dutch damsels thereabout, and still more by a certain person who shall be nameless. He thought himself an Adonis; and argued inwardly that no young lady in her senses would turn schoolmistress without some powerful incitement. The said demon whispered that this could be nothing but admiration for his person, and love of his company. Upon this hint he began, first, to ogle the young lady, then to take every opportunity to touch her hand or press against her elbow, until she could not but notice the peculiarity of his conduct. Finally, he wrote her a love-epistle, of such transcendent phraseology that it frightened Catalina out of school for ever. She did not wish to injure the simple fellow, and took this method of letting him know his fate. Poor Pliny the younger pined in thought, and soon after took his departure for the land of his nativity, where, on arrival, he was kindly forgiven by his uncle, the deacon, and received into the bosom of the meeting-house. Here he preached powerfully many years, never ran after whale ships more, and, in good time, by the death of his father, came to be called Pliny the elder.

CHAPTER XXII.

LETTERS WITHOUT ANSWERS.

THUS our unfortunate heroine was destined to lose, one by one, all her admirers. While these matters were passing, a correspondence on public affairs had been carried on between Sir William Johnson and Colonel Vancour, in which the former had taken occasion to mention the conduct of Sybrandt in terms of high approbation. He spoke of him as a youth of uncommon talents and intrepidity, in whose future welfare he took the deepest interest. The officers, too, who occasionally stopped at the mansion-house in their journeys from the frontier to New York, united in bearing testimony to his gallantry and enterprise; and, to crown all, the despatches of the general to his government at home made honourable mention of our hero. Catalina was not ignorant of these things, nor could she help feeling a proud gratification, that the man to whom she had given her heart was worthy of the gift. "But he is lost to me—he is wounded—perhaps dying; and he does not think it worth while to write or send to us."

But in this she did our hero injustice. He lay a long time fluctuating between life and death; but at length the vigour of youth, strengthened by his hopes of the future, got the better of the low fever which had succeeded his wounds and exposures, and he began gradually, but slowly, to recover. As soon as

his strength would permit, he wrote to Catalina, informing her of his explanation with Gilfillan; apologizing for his unfounded jealousy and rash departure from New York; and throwing himself on her generosity for pardon. It happened at this time there was no opportunity to send the letter by a public express, nor had Sybrandt patience to wait for one. In casting about for a messenger, he recollected a half-breed, a sort of loungeur and hanger-on about the fort, who performed all sorts of menial offices for rum, and was, in the most comprehensive sense of the word, a vagabond. Still, he had the reputation of courage, sagacity, and fidelity in the performance of his engagements; and our hero determined to employ him as the herald of Dan Cupid, who most probably was never served by such a varlet before. He had in times past been accustomed to forage about the Flats, where he was well known, and where Sybrandt became acquainted with him.

He accordingly intrusted him with his letter, together with two others, one for the good Dennis, the other for Colonel Vancour, the contents of which the reader may imagine for himself if he pleases. He was also imprudent enough to furnish the fellow with money to bear his expenses, instead of giving him a knapsack and provisions; and thus he despatched him, with many injunctions to proceed without delay, deliver his letters, wait an answer, and then return as soon as possible. This trusty blade, instead of following these directions, took the first opportunity, on his arrival at Albany, to get exceedingly drunk. Moreover, in that state he continued until all his money was spent. As a matter of necessity, he then became

sober; but his letters were gone — he had lost or destroyed them, or they had been taken from him; he could not tell how or when.

The worthy courier then deliberated what was proper and safe to be done. To go to the Flats without his credentials was out of the question; and to return to Fort George for a new set of instructions would be a vast accession of trouble, without any of pay. Nay, he might possibly get a broken head for his pains. This compendium of the virtues of the red and the white rose had an equal antipathy to having his head broken and to the volunteering of another journey. The result of his cogitations was a resolution to put the best face on the matter, make up a good story, and return forthwith to his employer. He accordingly presented himself before Sybrandt with an intrepidity of face and manner that would have done honour to the most practised diplomatist.

“Have you brought any letters?” asked our hero, eagerly, as he raised himself from the bed, where he still spent some hours of every day.

“No, sir; I no bring any ting.”

“Did you see the young lady?” said our hero, faintly.

“Yes, sir; I see her, and give her the letter.”

“And did she read it?”

“O, yes; she read it, and say, very nice letter — and then she laugh.”

“Laugh!” thought poor Sybrandt; and his heart sank within him; “but she gave you something in return?”

“Yes, sir; she gib me a guinea, and tell me go back agin as fast as I came — de letter no want answer.”

"Did she look pale? was she thin?" asked he, after a dead pause of agonized feeling.

"O no, sir! Her cheeks red as berries, and she merry as a cricket: she laugh very much when I tell her you sick abed."

Sybrandt groaned an echo to the laugh of his unfeeling mistress. It was some minutes before he could rally his spirits to ask any more questions.

"Did you see the colonel, and Madam Vancour?"

"O yes, sir; colonel very good — give me a dram, and say he 'spose Major Sybran' dead by dis time."

"And he, too, laughed, I suppose?" said Sybrandt, in bitterness of soul.

"No, he no laugh out loud like young madam — he only smile a leetle — so" — and the rascal just showed his ivory teeth.

Sybrandt found himself sicker and sicker at the heart, with every word he heard.

"And what did Madam Vancour say, when you told her my situation?" resumed he, at length.

"She tell me — no more than Master Sybran' deserve."

"Worse and worse!" — thought poor Master Sybrandt — "the draught becomes sharper: well, let me drink it to the dregs" — and he called anger and indignation to be his supporters.

"And what said my other uncle, Mr. Dennis Vancour?"

"What — old gentleman live on the hill? O, he say he 'spose Master Sybran' be dead 'fore he letter get at him, and tell me no occasion to write."

Sybrandt (as soon as he could muster strength and heart to do it) proceeded to question the mischievous

mongrel closely and strictly as to the truth of his tale, which seemed to be at war with all he knew of his mistress and his uncles. But the fellow was armed at all points, and answered with such consummate cunning, that at length our hero was compelled to believe that Catalina had on her return made to the family such a representation of his conduct as had for ever alienated him from their confidence and affection.

“Very well,” said he, after going rapidly through these reflections, and arriving at this consoling result — “very well — there — now go” — and he gave the rascal money for having performed his duty so speedily and well.

“I will trouble *her* no more; I will trouble *them* no more,” said he, as he laid himself down on his bed, with a hope that he might never rise from it. There was every appearance that this hope would soon be realized; for the result of this affair, coöperating with his weak and nervous state of mind and body, seemed now on the point of extinguishing in a few days, perhaps a few hours, the deadened spark of life in his aching heart.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE LAST SLEEP OF A GOOD MAN.

NOT many days after the events just recorded, a young officer stopped at the hospitable mansion of Colonel Vancour, on his way from Fort George to New York. It was in the dusk of the evening, and he was of course invited to stay all night. The conversation naturally turned on the events of the war, the prospect of peace, and the situation of matters on the frontier. Catalina was sitting at an open window, leaning her white cheek on her still whiter hand, listening in breathless silence, to hear perhaps the name of him who occupied so large a portion of her thoughts.

"Has any thing particular occurred at Fort George?" asked the colonel.

"Nothing — that I heard of," replied the officer: "I however only stopped there a few minutes, on my way from the foot of the lake, where I had been stationed for some time."

"Did you happen to hear any thing of Colonel Westbrook?" asked the other, in a low tone; but his daughter overheard him, and her heart beat quicker in her bosom.

"Westbrook? Westbrook? — Why, now I think of it — I did hear something of that gallant and lamented officer. He died, the day" —

"Hush! for heaven's sake!" whispered the colonel.

But the caution came too late. The words had met the ear of Catalina. She did not faint — she did not shriek, or scream, or wring her hands — but she sat like a statue of pure white marble carved by some famous artist to represent the silence of unutterable grief. Her mother was watching, and came and sat beside her daughter, who leaned on her bosom, and said not one word. In the course of a quarter of an hour she recovered sufficiently to beg Madam Vancour to go up stairs with her, and they left the room together.

After her departure the colonel proceeded with his inquiries.

“ You were saying, sir, that you understood Colonel Westbrook was dead. When I inform you that he is a near relation, and an object of great interest to my family, I hope you will excuse me for requesting you to be particular in relating the circumstances of his death.”

“ I am sorry,” replied the young man, “ that I cannot comply with your wishes. As I mentioned before, I stopped but a few minutes at the Fort, to pick up despatches, and, while sitting with the general, who was preparing them, the servant of Colonel Westbrook came running in to say his master had just expired. The general expressed great regret, and I, having received the papers, came away without hearing any thing further on the subject.”

Catalina did not rise with the sun as usual the next day, though it was one of the loveliest of all the lovely progeny of Summer. She attempted it, for she was not one of those who yield the victory to grief or sickness without a sore struggle. When she saw the

beams of the morning sun shining against the wall, and heard the birds calling her at the window, she attempted to get up, but her head became so dizzy she was obliged to let it fall again quietly upon the pillow. The old lady became alarmed; and all thoughts of being mother to a real titled lady vanished before the fears of maternal tenderness.

She therefore determined, as people frequently do when it is rather too late, to perform an act of unparalleled magnanimity; an act which merits being commemorated in brass and marble: in short, she resolved to desert the opposition, and go over to her husband. Accordingly, she went to the colonel, and frankly proposed to write to Sybrandt a full explanation of Catalina's conduct and present feelings, and invite him home.

"What! now that he is dead!" exclaimed the good man, with tears in his eyes.

"That's true; I declare I forgot it," replied the dame; "what shall we do?"

"Submit to the will of Heaven."

"Well,—but it's very provoking, though."

"What!, to submit to the will of Heaven?"

"No, my dear; that he should die just at this time."

"Such untoward accidents often happen in this world. You and I have lived long enough to see the hopes of youth withered in the blossom, the fruits of manhood's toils and cares mildewed before they were ripe. There is nothing certain in this world but death: why, then, should we be surprised that he died in the prime of his days? It is not half so strange as that you and I have lived to be old."

This was rather an ungallant speech, since age has ever been considered in polite society a reproach to a lady, and any allusion to it an offence to good-breeding. But Madam Vancour forgave, or did not notice, it. She was thinking of something nearer her heart than compliments. Was she not a remarkable woman?

"But perhaps, after all," said Madam, "the report of his death may be a mistake of the servant."

"Such reports generally turn out to be true. But I will see if I can gather any further information on the subject."

He ordered his horse, and rode to Albany, for the purpose of making inquiries. The commanding officer there had received letters by the hands of the young gentleman who had brought the news of Sybrandt's death, at the foot of one of which was this short postscript:—

"Colonel Westbrook is just dead."

The old gentleman returned, with a heavy heart, to the mansion of his fathers, and imparted this corroboration to his wife. They debated whether to disclose the whole at once to their daughter.

"It is best she should know it all, since she must know it soon," said the colonel; "go thou and tell her—I cannot." He walked forth into the fields, still glorious in the apparel of summer. But he viewed them through the spectacles of sorrow, and the sunny landscape seemed all bathed in tears.

It was now Catalina's turn to be sick. She heard the confirmation of the death of poor Sybrandt; and the loss of her lover was embittered by the consciousness that she was not free from guilt in the matter.

She it was that had driven him from his home, to the wars in which he had perished. But for her foolish vanity, her capricious inconsistencies, he might have been still living—and living for her. The thought was bitterness itself. But she rallied her pride, her piety, her strength of mind, her duty to her parents, and they conquered at last. Yet the victory was hardly won. Though the mind sustained itself nobly, its associate and fellow-labourer, the body, sunk under the conflict. Months passed away before she could sit up and contemplate the calm and tender aspect of nature, now fast putting on the many-coloured vesture of the waning year.

Nor was she the only sufferer. The good Dennis—the early friend, the father of our hero in all acts of fatherly affection—who had smoked his pipe almost threescore years in quiet in the same old arm-chair—heard the news of Sybrandt's death without any outward symptoms of sorrow or despair. He possessed no great store of sensibility, but a slight shock will shake down an old building. He knocked the ashes out of his pipe deliberately against his thumb-nail, and that evening, and the next, and the next morning, noon, and night, when it was brought to him he put it aside without uttering a word.

“Massa in a terrible bad way,” said his old dusky valet, who had been his playmate in youth, his faithful, humble friend through life; “massa in a terrible bad way when he no smoke he pipe.”

He was right. There is no surer indication of a wounded spirit or diseased body than the disrelish of a long-cherished habit. It smells of mortality. The quiet resignation with which the old gentleman received the

first shock gave place in a day or two to a degree of restlessness and impatience entirely at war with his usual deportment. It seemed as if his mind was disturbed by conflicting feelings of some kind or other, for he frequently shut himself up in his little private room, where he kept his papers, and where he was sometimes found when called to his meals, with elbows leaning on a table, and documents before him. When thus disturbed, he would appear rather pleased than otherwise, as though he had been relieved from some unpleasant struggle or uncertainty. On the fourth day after receiving the news of Sybrandt's death, he was found sitting in his arm-chair, dead. He had died without pain, for his face had all the placid quiet of a sweet sleep, and he sat upright as when alive.

"Ah! poor massa!" exclaimed the old negro; "he smoke him last pipe now!" And nature squeezed some honest tears from his dry and withered sympathies.

Dennis Vancour was a just man. He never — for it was not the fashion at that time — he never was secretary, or, what is still better, treasurer to a society for expending the hard gains of honest industry in the encouragement of idleness and unthrift. He never went about begging of others what he was able to bestow, himself; nor did he spend his time in the mischievous occupation of doing good to his fellow-creatures, the poor, by teaching them, as the wise and benevolent Franklin has it, "that there are other means of support besides industry and economy."

But these sins of omission were more than balanced by rare and valuable virtues. He never belied, or

cheated, or overreached a human being; he never denied his kind offices or fair report to the deserving, nor inquired, before he bestowed them, whether they were given to a member of his chosen society or his favourite religion. He walked quietly on his way without jostling a living soul with his elbow, or interfering with his concerns unless desired to do so; and within the circle where alone ordinary men can be useful in their exertions or their beneficence — the circle of his friends and neighbours — he diffused all his life a benign yet temperate influence, which caused every one that knew him to love him while living, and cherish his memory after he was gone. When he died, he left what he had received from his father to his nearest natural heirs, nor did he insult Heaven by robbing his kindred to commute for his own transgressions.

The day but one after the decease of this righteous man, on whose memory I confess I delight to dwell, the bell of the little octagon stone church at the Flats gave melancholy warning that the body of some heir of immortality was about to be consigned to that narrow house wherein no air can blow. There is to my mind and to my early recollections something exquisitely touching in the tolling of a church-bell amid the silence of the country. It communicates for miles around the message of death. The ploughman stops his horses to listen to the solemn tidings; the housewife remits her domestic occupations, and sits with needle idle in her fingers, to ponder who it is that is going to the long home; and even the little thoughtless children, playing and laughing their way from school, are arrested for a moment in their even-

ing gambols by these sounds of awful import, and cover their heads when they go to rest.

In a little while was seen a long procession of various rustic carriages, followed by people on foot and on horseback, of both sexes, and of all ages, slowly emerging from the court of the house whence the soul of the upright man had ascended to its reward, and passing onward to the place appointed for all living. The simple ceremony was soon over. A prayer was uttered, a hymn was sung; many an honest tear mixed with the earth thrown into the grave, as the nearest and dearest hung mournfully over it; and the remains of Dennis Vancour reposed in peace between the headstones of his honoured parents.

“HE WAS A GOOD MAN,” said an old patriarch of almost a hundred years, and the testimony was vouched by the hearts of all present. Does any one wish a nobler epitaph? If he does, let him go and take his choice of the legends engraven on the mouldering monuments of human vanity,—no part of which is true, perchance, but the veritable *Hic jacet*.

Had he lived a little while longer, he would not perhaps have been wiser, but he would have learned something, as the advertisements in the newspapers say, “greatly to his advantage.” But who would wish to rob him of an end so quiet, so resigned, so blessed, that he might learn the truth, and endure possibly a few years of infirmity and suffering; live, as some men live, to nurse the waning lamp of life by day and night, anxious and shivering lest every breath of air should blow it out; live in the perpetual fear of what must soon inevitably come, die without hope, and rot in the polluted atmosphere of a dishonoured name?

Who would wish so unkind a wish? Not I; for to my mind that man is most to be envied who is beyond the reach of calumny, and debarred by death from perhaps committing suicide on his own fame.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A GHOST!

HOWEVER people may grieve for the decease of a relative, they seldom neglect opening his will, the first decent opportunity. Such is the curiosity of mankind! This ceremony accordingly took place the day after the funeral of Mr. Dennis Vancour. That worthy gentleman, it would seem, on hearing of the death of his adopted son, had altered the disposition of his property, and substituted Catalina as his sole heiress, in the room of Sybrandt Westbrook. The change occasioned no surprise to the elders of the family, and certainly no pleasure to the young lady. She would have restored it to her cousin with her whole heart, and something else besides, had he not been beyond the reach of her generosity. As it was, the bequest was rather painful than otherwise, for it seemed almost like a robbery of the dead.

The colonel one day thought he would write to the commanding officer at Fort George, to get from him the particulars of his nephew's death, as well as to inquire into the disposition of his effects. He did so; but it was a considerable time before an opportunity occurred of sending the letter through the wilderness. In the mean time nothing particularly worthy of note took place in the family. Catalina gradually recovered a degree of composure becoming the dignity and strength of her character, and returned to her usual

occupations and amusements. But the worm was in the bud, and the expression of her countenance was neither that of health nor of hilarity. Time passed on slowly and heavily, without bringing with it either present pleasure or inspiring anticipations.

It was now about the close of the brown and gloomy month of November, when neither is verdure seen in the forest nor music heard in the fields, except that of the howling winds. A man on horseback, followed by a servant with a portmanteau, was seen to ride up to the door of the habitation once tenanted by Dennis Vancour, but since his death intrusted to the care of his servants, consisting of the venerable old negro heretofore noticed, and his wife, equally aged, with some half a dozen of their ebony grandchildren. It was the dusk of the evening, and they were all gathered round a rousing fire in the kitchen; for, be it known to all who know it not already, that the two animals in the world most devoted to heat and sunshine are the black snake and the gentleman of colour — by the which association I mean no sort of disrespect to the latter.

The horseman dismounted; so did his servant: and both conducted themselves with as little ceremony as if they were at home, or, at least, in some place where they might expect an equal welcome. Not one of the trusty guardians of the house heard or saw these intruders; for, as soon as the African race get thoroughly warmed through, the next thing is to fall fast asleep, as a matter of course. The stranger knocked with the but-end of his whip: — no one came. He then proceeded to manœuvre the great gaping brazen lion that guarded this enchanted castle — in

plain English, the knocker—which, I am bound to say, had lost none of its brightness. The sound was heard across the river, but it awaked not the family; they belonged to the lineage of the seven sleepers. The stranger became impatient, nay, anxious, at the air of silence and desertion about the house. He paced the piazza back and forth some half a dozen times, and then went round the end of the house to the kitchen in the rear, and looked through the windows, where he saw the slumbering beauties.

The sight seemed to animate him, for he briskly lifted the latch, and invaded the region sacred to the stomach. No one stirred, and no sound was heard save a sonorous concord of harmony, in which each of the company bore a part. The stranger advanced, and shook the shoulder of the patriarch of the tuneful tribe. He might as well have shaken the body of the good man of the house, who died some months before. The stranger then hallooed in his ear, but that was asleep too. “Blockhead!” quoth the stranger, muttering to himself; and, seizing a bowl of water that stood at hand, he very unceremoniously dashed it into the face of the exemplary sleeper, and spoiled one of the finest naps on record.

“Bo-o-o-o!” exclaimed old ebony, as he started up, amazed and indignant at this inundation. He wiped his eyes, probably for the purpose of seeing the clearer, and took a look at the stranger, which look was followed by immediate prostration, accompanied by a yell of such singular originality that I shall not attempt to describe it. The reader may, however, form some judgment of its powers, when I inform him that it actually awakened the rest of the sleepers.

The moment they laid their eyes upon the stranger, the cry of, "a spook! a spook!" was repeated with extraordinary energy, and followed by the flight of the whole tribe, with the exception of the patriarch, who still lay on his face, kicking and roaring manfully.

Return we now to the mansion-house of Colonel Vancour, in the well-warmed parlour of which was collected the usual family-party. The colonel was reading; Madam — would I could disguise the fact, but a scrupulous regard to accuracy forbids — Madam was knitting a pair of stockings for a poor woman who at that precise moment was frolicking at a neighbouring tavern; Ariel was, as usual at this hour of the evening, fast asleep, and musical as ever. He did not, like Rachel Baker, preach in his naps, but he could drown the voice of a preacher any day. Poor Catalina was at the window; whence, by the waning light, she could see and sympathize with the desolation of nature.

At this moment one of the dark ministering spirits of the neighbouring mansion rushed into the room, unannounced, and saluted the good company with the cry of —

"A spook! a spook! Massa Sybrandt's spook!"

"Hey! What's that you say about Sybrandt, you little black sinner?" exclaimed Ariel, waking up, which he did always exactly as he went to sleep, extempore.

"O, massa Sybrandt's spook come home agin" —

"I'll spook you, you little black imp of mischief," quoth Ariel, seizing the cushion from his chair, and launching it at his woolly head: — "Come here with

such a cock-and-bull story as that! Get out, you caterpillar."

But the herald of darkness maintained his station and his story, until the old people did not know what to make of it, and the young lady was in a tumult of conflicting emotions. It was impossible to get any thing more out of the creature than that the spook had appeared in a great shower of rain, and knocked granddaddy flat on his face upon the floor.

"Let us walk over, and inquire into the business," said the colonel, helping himself to his hat and stick; "perhaps something is really the matter with the old man."

"Come on," quoth Ariel, seizing a gun which hung in the hall upon the stately antlers of a deer; "perhaps — damn it — I don't know what to think of the matter."

"PERHAPS IT IS HE!" exclaimed Catalina, as a hope darted across her mind like the flash of a newly-lighted taper.

The two gentlemen seemed to share in her hopes, and departed in great haste.

While this was passing, the stranger had, by dint of shaking and reasoning with and reproaching the old negro, at length brought him to a perception of the reality before him.

"And young massa no dead, after all — no spook — hey!" And the good soul almost wept for joy of his young master's return, as well as sorrow for his old master's departure. By degrees he became sufficiently collected to give Sybrandt an account of the events we have heretofore recorded. The death of his kind uncle affected him deeply; — far more

deeply than the loss of his estate. He had disinherited him, it was true; but no doubt he had been convinced of his unworthiness by the representations of Catalina. There was wormwood in this thought; and, while he was chewing the bitter morsel, the colonel and Ariel entered without ceremony. The reception of Sybrandt, on the colonel's part, was somewhat cool and stately—his deportment, when the really joyful surprise of the moment was past, savouring of the recollection of his nephew's neglect of his daughter, of himself, and indeed all his nearest, dearest friends. Ariel on the other hand was all joy, noise, and forgiveness.

"But, why the plague did you not let us know you were alive?" said he, at length.

"I did not know you thought me dead," replied the youth.

"Thought?—we were sure of it. Do you suppose that Dennis would have dis—hem!—if he had not been certain of your death?"

"True," said the colonel; "the bequest was certainly made under that impression alone. It remains for me to remedy the consequences of this mistake."

"He did right," said Sybrandt; "he has left his fortune to her who best deserved it."

"Damn it, boy, you talk like a fool. To leave you a beggar—no—not a beggar—I can prevent that;" quoth Ariel.

"My dear uncle, I am no beggar; I have a sword and a commission, a heart and a hand."

"Spoken like a brave fellow. But I am very much mistaken if you don't have something besides a sword and a commission."

"I am content."

"But I am not," said the colonel; "there cannot be a doubt that my brother Dennis altered his will under the full conviction (which indeed was common to us all) that you were no more."

"I cannot conceive how such a report could have originated, or be believed, sir."

"I saw it in a postscript to a letter of the commander-in-chief."

"Indeed! Then I do not wonder, sir, that you put faith in it."

"But, to the point," resumed the colonel: "Catalina is of age; and she is no daughter of mine if she holds this bequest a moment longer than is necessary to divest herself of it. I pledge you my honour she will."

"And I pledge you mine, sir," said Sybrandt, somewhat bitterly, "that I would rather starve than accept one single atom of the land, or one penny of the gold."

"It is justly yours."

"It never shall be mine."

"Indeed!" replied the colonel, rather offended; "may I ask, why? Perhaps the donor is not sufficiently valued to make the donation welcome?"

"Spare me on this subject, sir. I had rather not talk of it; nor is it necessary. To-morrow I shall return to the army. To-night — for one night — I will trespass on the hospitality of my cousin, and remain here, with her permission."

"You shall go home with me," said the colonel, with honest warmth, notwithstanding he felt that the language and conduct of our hero was somewhat on

the cavalier order; "you shall go home with me: my daugh — my wife, your aunt, will be glad to see you."

"You shall go home with me," cried Ariel; "but, now I think of it, I am going to sleep at the colonel's to-night, because I have got to superintend a hundred and fifty things there early in the morning."

Sybrandt declared his determination to remain where he was.

"Well, then," said the colonel, advancing, and taking his hand, "promise me, on your honour, you will visit your aunt before you go away."

"Of course, sir — certainly — it was my intention. I owe too much to her kindness, to forget both my respect and my duty. I hope she is well?"

"Quite well."

"And my cousin?" Sybrandt forced himself to ask.

"Why, well — at least better than she has been."

"What! Has she been ill?"

"Very ill — just after we received the news — I mean about two months ago. Indeed, she is hardly recovered; you will be surprised to see her look so pale — almost as pale as you are. But, good-night — I can no longer delay making both mother and daughter happy, with the news that one has recovered a nephew, the other an old friend. You will keep your word, and come to-morrow?"

"Assuredly, sir." — 'Make them happy'! thought he, repeating the words of the colonel; 'make them happy', with the news that I am alive! Pshaw!, they care not for me, none of them, or they would have answered my letters. But" — and a sudden idea crossed him — "but perhaps, as Sir William suggest-

ed, they never received them. It is possible; and to-morrow I will so far lower my pride as to put the question. It is but justice to old friends to give them an opportunity of disclaiming neglect or unkindness."

CHAPTER XXV.

THE BIRTH AND PARENTAGE OF A RUMOUR.

IN order to account for some portion of the preceding details, it will be necessary to go back to the period when the faithful half-breed did *not* carry the letters of our hero to the Flats, and of course returned without answers. This disappointment, acting on the low state of our hero's spirits and exhausted frame, produced an almost infantine weakness, and rendered him incapable of any kind of exertion for some time. Having one day, however, made more than ordinary efforts, and fatigued himself greatly, he fell into a fainting fit, which his servant mistook for death, and in his fright announced it as such to the general, in the presence of the young officer, as before related. The general was at that moment closing a letter to the commanding officer at Albany, and wrote the hasty postscript which Colonel Vancour saw.

That Sybrandt ever awakened from his swoon was, in a great measure, owing to the persevering efforts of his friend Sir William, who happened to be coming to see him just at the moment, and whose long experience in administering to his subjects, the Indians, had made him no indifferent practitioner. He succeeded in restoring him at last, and the youth again opened his eyes to that world which at the moment he wished to shut out for ever.

The campaign henceforth lagged ; and, one day, Sir William said to Sybrandt :

“ You must go with me to Johnstown to recruit, before you return home, which I suppose you mean to do, as soon as you are able. There will be nothing done here till the spring.”

“ I feel no wish to leave this place. I may as well die here as anywhere.”

“ If you stay here you will certainly die of consumption. I don't like that hollow cough. Come, I will procure you sick-leave, a comfortable conveyance, and an excellent nurse, that is, myself. Nay, no scruples of love or honour. I say you shall go, or I will put you under arrest, and carry you in fetters. You would cut a pretty figure, going home now to your mistress. She might lawfully break her faith, on the score of your not being the same man.”

“ I have neither mistress nor home, now,” said the youth, in a voice of the deepest depression.

“ What, again ! — at your old tricks again ?” cried Sir William, holding up his finger in a threatening manner. “ Are you making mince-meat of your own hopes and happiness, as usual ?”

“ No, Sir William ; the fault is not mine *now* at least, whatever it might have been formerly. I am an alien from my home, and an offcast of my mistress.”

“ Indeed ! And by your own fault ?”

“ No, on my soul. I was deceived, and, the moment I discovered my error, hastened to acknowledge and atone for it. But my letters were read with scorn on one hand, and unfeeling apathy on the other. I shall never return home : at all events, not till I have learned to forget and forgive.”

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“Tell me the particulars; remember you are talking to a friend, and that with me that name signifies the service of heart and hand.”

Sybrandt then proceeded to relate what the reader already knows—the conduct of Catalina in New York, his anger and jealousy, the story of the picture, the explanation of Gilfillan, and, finally, the mission of the half-breed to the Flats.

Sir William listened with kind attention, and at the conclusion mused for some time.

“Strange!” said he, at length. “The conduct of your mistress is unaccountable enough, to begin with. But that Colonel Vancour, a man so kind-hearted and so just as I know him to be; and, above all, that your good father, Dennis, who, you say, had treated you with such unvaried kindness from your youth upwards—that he should have made such an unfeeling speech is out of all reasonable calculation. I cannot make it out; unless, indeed, some one has belied you: and who could it be, except—. But that is out of the question. You are grossly deceived, and have deceived me, in the character of Miss Vancour, or it cannot possibly be she.”

“I think it almost impossible. But she may have viewed my conduct in a different light from that in which I have represented it to you. The pride of the father may have been wounded, and his feelings may have reached my benefactor, over whom he has great influence.”

Sir William mused again, then suddenly exclaimed, “I have it!—I have it. My life on it, that scoundrel half-breed played you a trick. He never delivered your letters. Where is he? Let him be brought be-

fore me. I warrant I trip him in crossing his track, as these fellows say."

"I know not. He wandered away somewhere, not long after I employed him in this business."

"I dare say,—no doubt—no doubt—the rascal was fearful of being detected. But we shall find out the truth before long. Have you not written, since?"

"Why should I?"

"True: but you shall write instantly; at least, on the very first opportunity. I am almost sure you have been cheated by that mongrel."

"I had rather not write again. To Catalina I certainly shall not, nor to her father. Were my benefactor really my parent, I would beg his forgiveness, if I had offended him, until he granted it, or turned me for ever from his door. But it seems to me it would be meanness to crawl on my knees to solicit—what?—his charity. I cannot do it."

"You are a proud genius," said Sir William, shaking his head; "but I like a little pride; it often saves man, and woman too, from falling. I shall write myself then, when I get home, and an occasion offers. In the mean time, without an if or an and, you are my prisoner. Be ready to accompany me to-morrow."

"I obey," said the other. "But nothing about prisoners—I go as a volunteer."

The next morning they were ready to depart, under the protection of an escort of Sir William's Mohawks, some of whom by turns carried Sybrandt in a rude litter of boughs. There were no carriage-roads through the wilderness between Fort George and the capital of the knight's dominions, and Sybrandt was still too weak to walk, or ride on horseback any great

distance. The Grand Canal was not yet dreamed of; and, as for railroads, if the people of that age of non-improvement had heard that the people of this would risk their necks in riding at the rate of sixty miles an hour, they would have taken it for granted they were riding to — whew!

The exercise of travelling, coöperating with the new-born hope which the suggestion of his friend Sir William had awakened, proved of great service to our hero, who arrived at the residence of that worthy gentleman far better than when he set out. He remained with him, occasionally hunting, and invigorating thus both mind and body, until both had in some degree recovered a healthful tone.

“As you seemed disinclined to write,” said Sir William, one day, “I have done it for you. I shall send a person to Albany to-morrow. Here is the letter — read, and tell me how you like it. This is the next best thing I can think of, though my own opinion is, you had much better go yourself, and see and hear with your own eyes and ears. This is the way I always do, whenever it is practicable. Half the blunders and miseries of this world arise from sending instead of going.”

Sybrandt had been gradually coming to the same conclusion, and frankly answered,

“Well, Sir William, since you will turn me out of doors, there is no help for it. I will go with your messenger to-morrow; though, on my soul, I had rather encounter another bush-fight.”

“You are an odd fellow,” said the other, smiling, “and seem afraid of nothing — but a woman.” Accordingly all things were made ready for the morrow.

“Westbrook,” said the knight, as they were taking leave, “I am no true prophet if you are a bachelor this day twelvemonth. Farewell. I would thou hadst been my son.”

“Farewell. Would to heaven I had such a father!”

Our hero proceeded slowly on his journey, passing the first night at Schenectady, the next at Albany, for he was in no haste to get to the end of his journey, where he anticipated but a renewal of his disappointments, regrets, and mortifications. He staid all day in his room at Albany, and was congratulated on being alive, by the few people that saw him. “Some scurvy jest,” thought he, and never asked for an explanation. In the evening he left Albany, and arrived at the mansion of his deceased benefactor in the manner we have before described.

CHAPTER XXVI.

OUR HERO RECEIVES BACK HIS UNCLE'S ESTATE WITH AN ENCUMBRANCE.

WHILE the reader has been travelling backwards, the pale and gentle Catalina had been let into the secret of the ghost story by her mother. At first she became paler than ever, and could hardly support herself on her chair. Then she turned red, and a rosy blush of hope and love beamed on her cheek, where, for many a day, it had not beamed before. "I will bestow it all on him again," thought she, and her full heart relieved itself in a shower of silent tears.

That night a thousand floating dreams of the past and the future flitted before her troubled mind, and, as they reigned in turn, gave birth to different purposes and determinations. But the prevailing thought was, that her cousin had treated her unjustly and unkindly, and that it became the dignity of her sex to maintain a defensive stateliness, a cold civility, until he had acknowledged his errors and begged forgiveness. She settled the matter by deciding, that, when Sybrandt came the next day to take his leave, she would deliver him a deed for the estate of his uncle, which her father was to have prepared for her, insist on his acceptance, and then bid him adieu for ever without a sigh or a tear. In the morning she begged, that, when Sybrandt came to call on her mother, she might be permitted to see him alone. Her request was acquiesced in, and she waited in trembling anxiety

his promised visit. He came soon after breakfast, and Madam Vancour was struck with the improvement which a military uniform, in place of a suit of master Ten Broeck's snuff-coloured cloth, produced. After a somewhat painful and awkward interview, Sybrandt forced himself to inquire after Catalina.

"She has had a long illness," said the mother, "and you will scarcely know her. But she wishes to see you."

"To see *me*?" cried Sybrandt, almost starting out of his skin.

"Ay — you — her old playmate, and cousin. Is that so very extraordinary?" replied Madam, smiling. "She is in the next room: go to her."

"Go — go — to her," stammered our hero; "surely, you cannot mean —"

"I mean just what I say. She is waiting to see you in the next room. I hope you don't mean to keep her waiting much longer." And Madam again smiled.

"What *can* this mean?" thought Sybrandt, while he crept towards the door with about the eagerness that a man feels who is on the point of being hanged.

"I shall tell Catalina how anxious you were to see her."

"They must think I have no feeling — or they have none themselves;" and the thought roused his native energies. He strutted into the next room as if he was leading his regiment to battle.

"Don't look so fierce, or you will frighten my daughter," said Madam.

But Catalina was frightened almost out of her wits,

already. She was too much taken up in rallying her own self-possession to observe how Sybrandt looked when he walked. He had indeed been some moments in the room before either could utter a single word. At length their eyes met, and the excessive paleness each observed in the countenance of the other went straight to the hearts of both.

"Dear cousin," said Sybrandt, "how ill you look." This was rather what is called a left-handed compliment. But Catalina was even with him, for she answered in his very words :

"Dear cousin, how ill *you* look."

Pride and affection were now struggling in the bosoms of the two young people. Sybrandt found his courage, like that of Bob Acres, "oozing out at the palms of his hands," in the shape of a cold perspiration ; but the pride of woman supported Catalina, who rallied first, and spoke as follows, at first in a faltering tone, but by degrees with modest firmness :

"Colonel Westbrook," said she, "I wished to see you on a subject which has occasioned me much pain—the bequest of my uncle. I cannot accept it. It was made when we all thought you were no more." She uttered this last part of the sentence with a plaintiveness that affected him deeply. "She feels for me," thought he ; "but then she would not answer my letter." Catalina proceeded :

"I should hate myself, could I think for a moment of robbing you of what is yours—what I am sure my uncle intended should be yours, until he thought you dead." And the same plaintive tones again thrilled through Sybrandt. "But she would not answer my letter," thought he, again.

“Sybrandt,” continued she, “I sent for you, with the full approbation of my father and mother, to make over this property to you, to whom it belongs. I am of age; and here is the conveyance. I beseech you, as you value my peace of mind, to accept it with the frankness with which it is offered.”

“What, rob my cousin? No, Catalina: never.”

“I feared it,” said Catalina, with a sigh; “you do not respect me enough to accept even of justice at my hands.”

“It would be meanness—it would be degradation; and, since you charge me with a want of respect to you, I must be allowed to say that I am too proud to accept any thing, much less so great a gift as this, from one who did not think the almost death-bed contrition of a man who had discovered his error, and was anxious to atone for it, worthy of her notice.”

“What—what do you mean?” exclaimed Catalina.

“The letter I sent you,” replied he, proudly. “I never meant to complain or remonstrate; but you have forced me to justify myself.”

“In the name of Heaven, what letter?”

“That which I wrote you the moment I was sufficiently recovered of my wounds—to say that I had had a full explanation with Colonel Gilfillan; to say that I had done you injustice; to confess my folly; to ask forgiveness; and—and to offer you every atonement which love or honour could require.”

“And you wrote me such an one?” asked Catalina, gasping for breath.

“I did—the messenger returned—he had seen

you gay and happy; and he brought a verbal message that my letter required no answer."

"And is this—is this the sole—the single cause of your subsequent conduct? Answer me, Sybrandt, as you are a man of honour—is it?"

"It is. I cannot—you know I never could bear contempt or scorn from man or woman."

"What would you say, what would you do, if I assured you solemnly I never saw that letter, or dreamed it was ever written?"

"I would say, that I believed you as I would the white-robed truth herself; and I would on my knees beg your forgiveness for twice doubting you."

"Then I do assure you, in the singleness of my heart, that I never saw or knew aught of it."

"And did—did Gilfillan speak the truth?" panted our hero.

She turned her inspiring eye full upon the youth, and sighed forth in a whisper, "He did," while the crimson current revisited her pale cheek, and made her snow-white bosom blush rosy red. . . .

"You are mine then, Catalina, at last," faltered Sybrandt, as he released her yielding form from his arms.

"You will accept my uncle's bequest?" asked she, with one of her long-absent smiles.

"Provided you add yourself, dearest girl."

"You must take it with that encumbrance," said she,—and he sealed the instrument of conveyance upon her warm, willing lips.

"What can they have to talk about, all this time, I wonder?" cogitated the old lady, while she fidgeted

about from her chair towards the door, and from the door to her chair. As she could distinguish the increasing animation of their voices she fidgeted still more; and there is no knowing what might have been the consequence, if the lovers had not entered the room looking so happy that the old lady thought the very elixir of life was in them both. The moment Sybrandt departed, Catalina explained all to her mother. "Alas!" thought the good woman; "she will never be a titled lady: yet, who knows but Sybrandt may one day go to England and be knighted?" This happy thought reconciled her at once to the whole catastrophe, and she embraced her daughter, sincerely wishing her joy at the removal of all her perplexities.

"Damn it," said Ariel, "if I ever saw a more glorious wedding-supper in my life!"

"Do you recollect my last words when we parted, Colonel Westbrook?" said Sir William Johnson, their most honoured guest.

"I do, Sir William. You are a prophet, as well as a warrior and legislator."

"What did he say?," whispered a blushing damsel, dressed all in white, and beautiful as the most beautiful morning in June, who sat by the side of our hero, — "What did he say?"

"He said, in less than a twelvemonth I should be married to an angel."

"Take care it does not turn out like dreams, which, you know, go by contraries," said the aforementioned blushing damsel, whose eye looked exactly like love's firmament.

But the knight turned out a true prophet, even according to the gallant turn given to his prediction by our hero.

Catalina approved herself an excellent wife, and a pattern of a mother; for she never let her husband find out she was not an angel, nor her children that she could be conquered by importunity. I grieve, however, to say, that the good Madam Vancour never had the happiness to be mother to a real titled lady. One of Sybrandt's cousins however, came over in process of time, a baronet, with bloody hand, and the old lady consoled herself, that, if not the mother, she was a near connexion of a near relation of a man who could make his wife a lady. What was better than all this, the cousin was in a fair way of becoming an old bachelor, and Sybrandt was his heir-at-law.

"Who knows," thought Madam Vancour, — "who knows but he may die single, and I live to see Catalina a lady at last." People who have any thing to expect from the death of others always calculate to outlive them. Madam had ten good years the start of the man on whose demise she was speculating.

But we have been getting on altogether too fast. To return to the marriage-eve : —

"Sybrandt," said Sir William, "I shall be obliged to depart to-morrow before you are up. Farewell!, and happiness attend you this night, and always. I have but one word to add — action, remember, action alone can secure the happiness of your future life, by making you useful and distinguished."

"But where is your moral, my good friend?" quoth one of my most devoted readers, an elderly lady, secretary, treasurer, directress, &c. &c., of fifty societies. "I can't find out your moral," — wiping her specs.

"My dear madam, can't you see it through one of the glasses of your spectacles? The moral of my story is found in the last words; just as all the moral of the life of a rogue is gathered from his dying speech."

"Action — pshaw! Remember, action! I wouldn't give a fig for such a moral — not I."

"Well then, my dear madam, if you don't like that, I will give you another. The moral of my story is, a warning to all young and desperate lovers, never to go courting in a pair of snuff-coloured smallclothes, perpetrated by Master Goosee Ten Broeck."

"Pshaw! I'll never read another book of yours — that I am determined on."

"Then, madam, you'll never be as wise as your grandmother."

THE END.



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